

King in good health after 2nd treatment session

AMMAN (Petra) — Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor arrived on Sunday in Washington D.C. after the King completed the second session of his chemotherapy treatment at Mayo Clinic in Rochester which went extremely well. The hospital sources said that the King is in good health following the treatment and his doctors have allowed him to leave for a few days rest before starting the third phase of the treatment. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh and Royal Court Chief Jawad Anani are due to leave Amman today for Washington to meet the King.

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Sudan seeks probe of U.S. chemical weapons charge

U.N. official: It's tough to add suffering to suffering

KHARTOUM (R) —

Sudanese and United Nations officials on Sunday visited the medicine factory destroyed in a U.S. missile strike which injured 10 people.

"We are very concerned about this incident," said Philippe Borel, United Nations resident coordinator, as he surveyed the wreckage of the Al Shifa pharmaceutical factory in Khartoum.

"What we have to put into perspective is the suffering of the Sudanese people from this terrible war," he said, referring to the more than a decade-old Sudan civil war. "It's tough to add suffering to suffering."

The United States on Thursday launched the raids against what it called "terrorist" related sites in Afghanistan and Sudan in retaliation for the bombing of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania this month in which more than 260 people died.

Sudan said the factory was not involved in producing chemical weapons nor was it linked to Osama Ben Laden, an Afghanistan-based Islamist that Washington accused of financing and organising the embassy bombings.

Sudan has asked for delegations from the U.S. Congress and the United Nations to visit the site to see whether there is any evidence it was used for making chemical weapons components.

Abdul Aziz Shenou, an aide to Sudan Parliament Speaker Hassan Al Turabi, described the strike as "vicious."

"The United States has a duty to its own people and to the international community to prove its allegations," he said at the factory site.

"The rubble is here. Any investigating committee is welcome to come and search for itself. This was not an act of self-defence but an act of retaliation for something we have condemned," he said, referring to the Sudan government's condemnation of the Kenya and Tanzania embassy bombings.

He said if U.S. President Bill Clinton "would lie to his nation and his family" about an affair with former White House intern Monica Lewinsky, "... he would equally lie about a



A Sudanese employee at the pharmaceutical plant which has been destroyed by U.S. strikes last Thursday in Khartoum, displays a bottle of medicine, Sunday, to disprove American claims it made chemical weapons (AFP photo)

chemical factory."

Demonstrations against the missile attack have raged in the capital every day since the missile strike, with protesters waving placards that say "No war over Monica" and chanting slogans calling for the downfall of the United States.

Sudan is counting on strong Arab backing when the Cairo-based Arab League holds an emergency meeting Monday, which Sudan Foreign Minister Mustafa Osman Ismail will address.

"I hope the Arabs will not try to placate the United States by issuing statements that are void and meaningless," said Sudan Ambassador Ahmad Abdul Halim in Cairo Sunday after meeting Arab League Secretary General Esmat Meguid.

The United Nations is expected Monday to discuss Sudan's request for an urgent meeting.

The U.N. Security Council's Sanctions Committee had approved supplies to Iraq from the Al Shifa factory.

In a live interview with Qatari Al Jazeera television on Saturday, Sudanese President Omar Hassan Al Bashir said Sudan had the right to retaliate against the U.S. strikes.

Hundreds of Sudanese people mobbed the British embassy in Khartoum Saturday, pelting it with rocks. There were no casualties, an embassy employee said. Britain has said it supports the U.S. air strikes.

Sudanese demonstrators Friday attacked the U.S. embassy in Khartoum, tearing down the U.S. flag and throwing chairs

and rocks at the building. Washington withdrew its resident diplomats from the embassy in 1996, but diplomats visit.

U.S. officials said cruise missiles launched from ships carried out the strikes. Sudan says American forces fired seven Tomahawk missiles, six of which hit the plant.

A British engineer who worked at the factory told Sunday's Observer newspaper in London that it was not used to make chemical weapons.

"I have intimate knowledge of the factory and it just does not lend itself to the manufacture of chemical weapons," Tom Carnaffin, who worked as technical manager for the plant's owners between 1992 and 1996, told the newspaper.

'Ben Laden safe in Afghanistan'

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Saudi millionaire dissident Osama Ben Laden is alive and "secure" in Afghanistan, Taliban Islamist's representative in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) told AFP Sunday.

"Osama Ben Laden is still in Afghanistan and he is secure," the Taliban's charge d'affaires, Jan Mohammad Madani, in Abu Dhabi said.

"He is our guest and we will defend him," he added.

The UAE, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan are the only three countries to have recognised the Taliban

as Afghanistan's legitimate government. Madani said the Taliban now considered themselves to be "at war with the United States" following the "unjustifiable raids against our country."

"Our relations with the United States were better before [the attacks] and we were expecting them to recognise the Taliban government," he said.

Taliban Islamists have repeatedly said they will not hand over Ben Laden and have rejected U.S. accusations that the millionaire was sponsoring terrorism worldwide.

Sudanese court jails 10 for plot to topple president

Agencies

A SUDANESE court has jailed 10 people for trying to topple President Omar Hassan Al Bashir's government, Khartoum newspapers said Sunday.

They said the court imposed sentences ranging from five to 10 years on the accused, one of whom was tried in his absence.

It acquitted five because of lack of evidence and a 70-year-old man because of his age.

The papers did not say when the verdict was delivered.

The group, headed by retired navy officer Khajali Mubarak Khajali and his brother Salah, was arrested last September. They were charged with undermining the constitution, carrying out assassinations and having dealings with hostile countries.

They were also accused of planning to plant explosives in Sudan's main towns and plotting an armed uprising with support from neighbouring Eritrea.

Sudan has accused Eritrea

of helping rebels fighting the Khartoum government. Asmara denies the charge.

The government has said the defendants belonged to the Sudan Alliance Forces (SAF), led by Abdul Aziz Khaled, a former Sudanese army officer and an opposition leader in Asmara.

On Saturday, Sudanese Parliament Speaker Hassan Al Turabi, who is widely regarded as the real power behind the military-backed government, said the attack the U.S. strike on a factory in Khartoum has strengthened popular support for the Islamic government and that it will not deter the government from following through with its policies.

Sudan "will not abandon its agenda of implementing Islamic laws," the pro-government Alwan daily on Sunday quoted Turabi as telling an anti-American rally in the central Sudanese town of Medani on Saturday.

"We knew beforehand that we would not be able to build a strong state without such challenges and tests," Turabi was quoted as saying.

Iran, Taliban talk over release of diplomats

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran is in direct contact with the Taliban in an effort to secure the release of diplomats and other Iranian nationals detained by the Islamists in Afghanistan, Iran's state radio announced Sunday.

Iran's consul-general in Jalalabad, eastern Afghanistan, discussed the issue in a telephone conversation with Molavi Valid Ahmad, a member of the Taliban's government council, the radio said, quoting Iran's permanent envoy on Afghanistan, Alaeddin Boroujerdi.

Vakil Ahmad reportedly told the Iranian diplomat that the Taliban had no knowledge of the whereabouts of the 10 diplomats and the journalist of the official IRNA news agency.

They were reportedly captured by the Taliban after the takeover on August 8 of Mazar-e-Sharif, a city in northern Afghanistan which had been a stronghold of the Iranian-backed anti-Taliban alliance. But the Islamists have denied detaining them.

But Boroujerdi said the Iran-

ian consul had been allowed to meet with some 50 other Iranian nationals held in Kandahar, a Taliban stronghold in eastern Afghanistan.

On Friday, the hardline Taliban allowed a group of reporters from Pakistan to visit 78 Iranian prisoners, who looked healthy but worried.

Among those held were 30 drivers captured by the Islamists in Mazar-e-Sharif. The other 48 Iranians were detained by the Taliban last year in the northern region, Taliban officials said.

Boroujerdi said Iran's contact with the Taliban was established after the visit by Pakistani journalists.

Meanwhile, Mohammad Sadiq Kanju, Pakistan's minister of state for foreign affairs, is due to visit Tehran on Sunday to discuss the fate of the diplomats.

Iran has put pressure on Islamabad, an ally of the Taliban, to intervene to secure the diplomats' freedom, and the issue had provoked a political row between the two neighbours.

Regent meets with Brotherhood leaders; says all Jordanians shoulder responsibility

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Sunday said all Jordanians are considered partners in shouldering the responsibility in dealing with issues through responsible dialogue aimed at serving common interests.

The Regent was speaking at a meeting in the Royal Court with the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, Abdul Majid Thuneibat, along with some members of the Brotherhood's executive bureau.

The meeting, attended by Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh and Royal Court Chief Jawad Anani, conformed with the policy of maintaining quiet and responsible dialogue with all Jordanian sectors as has been previously emphasised by the Regent.

The meeting was also in line with His Majesty King Hussein's letter of designation to the prime minister in which he stressed the importance of dialogue as a means for handling various issues.

Thuneibat presented the



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan meets with leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood on Sunday (Photo by Boghos)

Regent with a memorandum clarifying the Muslim Brotherhood's views regarding economic and political issues as well as public freedoms.

It was agreed that dialogue and contact should continue.

In the coming days, the Regent will be meeting

with representatives of different political groups including political parties, professional unions, journalists and other civic institutions.

Prince Hassan had said at a meeting with the Parliament members and the Cabinet Saturday that the doors of the Royal Palace

will be open for responsible dialogue with all members of the Jordanian family.

The Crown Prince also called on the state's different sectors to bear their responsibilities through constructive dialogue and aimed at achieving a better life for the Jordanian people.

Abbadi receives King's Medal for Distinguished Performance

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, received at the Royal Court Sunday members of the Amman Municipal Council along with former Mayor Mamdouh Abbadi and the newly-appointed Mayor Nidal Hadid.

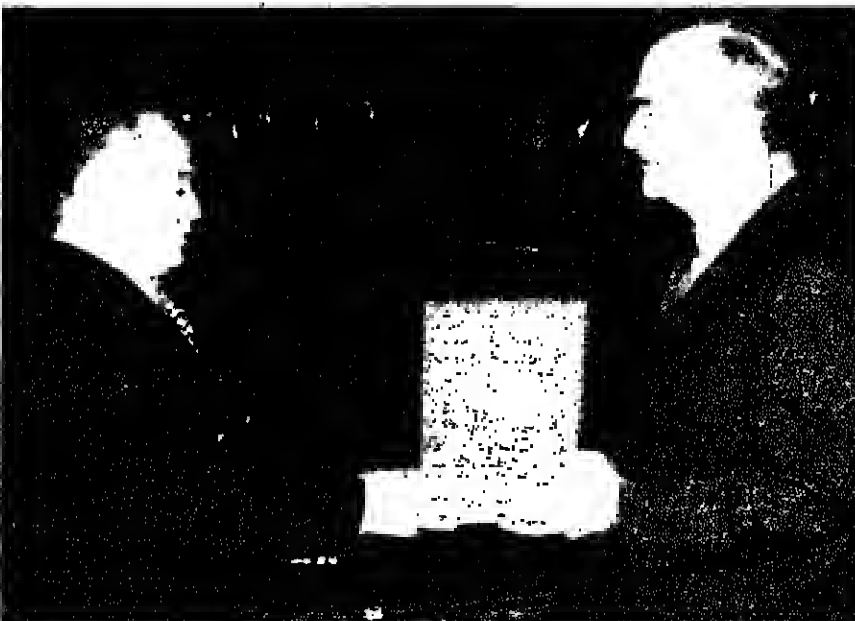
In an address at the meeting which was attended by Chief of the Royal Court Jawad Anani, Prince Hassan paid tribute to the council in their drive to develop the city of Amman to meet the growing needs of its citizens.

The Regent thanked Abbadi for his services and efforts exerted during his term.

Prince Hassan conferred upon Abbadi His Majesty King Hussein's Medal for Distinguished Performance of the First Order in recognition of his achievements. He also congratulated the new mayor, emphasising the need for the municipal council to pursue efforts towards further achievements and urging them to work in a team spirit.

Prince Hassan urged the municipal council to ensure better service for citizens.

Abbadi resigned his post Saturday and was succeeded by his deputy Nidal Hadid. During Abbadi's five-year term



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan delivers the King's Medal for Distinguished Performance to former Amman Mayor Mamdouh Abbadi, Sunday. Abbadi resigned his post Saturday to be replaced by Nidal Hadid (Photo by Boghos)

as mayor, Amman witnessed numerous changes in public facilities and services such as traffic tunnels to ease traffic con-

gestion, a new market in Wihdat area and the construction of the new municipality complex at Ras Al 'Ain.

'Spain's intelligence agency warns of Algerian plutonium'

MADRID (R) — Spain's

military secret service CESID has learned that Algeria will be able in two years to produce weapons-grade plutonium, a key ingredient for making atomic bombs, a Spanish newspaper reported Sunday.

A CESID report stated that Algeria, despite having signed the international nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, had forged ahead with a nuclear programme aided by China and Argentina that far exceeded its civilian needs, El Pais said.

The report, submitted to the Spanish government last month, sounded a warning of the danger involved if Algeria decided to divert its nuclear programme to military purposes, the newspaper said.

CESID agents have determined that the nuclear complex at Birine, 250 kilometres south of Algiers, already has a heavy-water reactor in operation capable of produc-

ing weapons-grade plutonium, El Pais reported.

The spy agency's report stated that Algeria "has all the installations needed to carry out activities linked to the complete cycle for the creation of military plutonium" by the end of the century, the newspaper said.

Algeria, which has always denied its nuclear programme has military uses, formally renounced nuclear arms in January 1995 when it joined the non-proliferation group.

It signed an agreement in 1996 with the Vienna-based U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency opening its facilities to agency inspections.

Nevertheless, CESID concluded that if Algeria changed its policy of not acquiring atomic weapons, "the knowledge gathered by a significant team of technicians and scientists, in addition to the availability of

facilities... will place this country in the position of ini-

tiating a programme of military purposes."

IRBID CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

announces that its offices will be transferred to its new premises at **RATIB AL-BATAINEH STREET** ON **MONDAY 24/8/1998**

Tel.: 255746, 255757, 255758, 255759 and 242077

Fax.: 00962-2-242072

Palestinians say baby dies under Hebron curfew

HEBRON (R) — A Palestinian mother in the West Bank town of Hebron said Sunday that her baby died after Israeli soldiers at a checkpoint delayed her in getting him to a hospital.

Troops have sealed off Hebron since Friday while searching for a suspected Palestinian who stabbed a Jewish settler to death and set fire to his home.

Sherine Badr Al Haddad, 23, said she wanted to take her three-month-old son Qosay, one of a set of triplets, to Hebron's Alia hospital on Saturday because he had been suffering from influenza.

She tried to pass through an Israeli army checkpoint next to her home but when soldiers barred her entry, she had to take a longer route through grapevines and by the time she reached the hospital Qosay was dead, she said.

The army said it was checking the report of the baby's death but that standing orders

required soldiers at roadblocks to ensure humanitarian and emergency needs be met without delay.

"He was sick, but if they had let us go to the hospital we could have saved his life," Haddad sobbed.

"They even refused to let us bury him in the family grave plot because of the curfew. We had to bury him on land outside our home," she said.

The triplets were born to much media fanfare.

"When he was born, the photographers and television came. Now when he died, they have come again," Haddad said.

At the hospital, Ziad Ashab said he examined the body and determined that the boy had a fever and breathing difficulties and might have survived had there been no delay.

Tension has run high in Hebron since Rabbi Shlomo Raanan was killed on Thursday night.

Raanan was the third Jewish

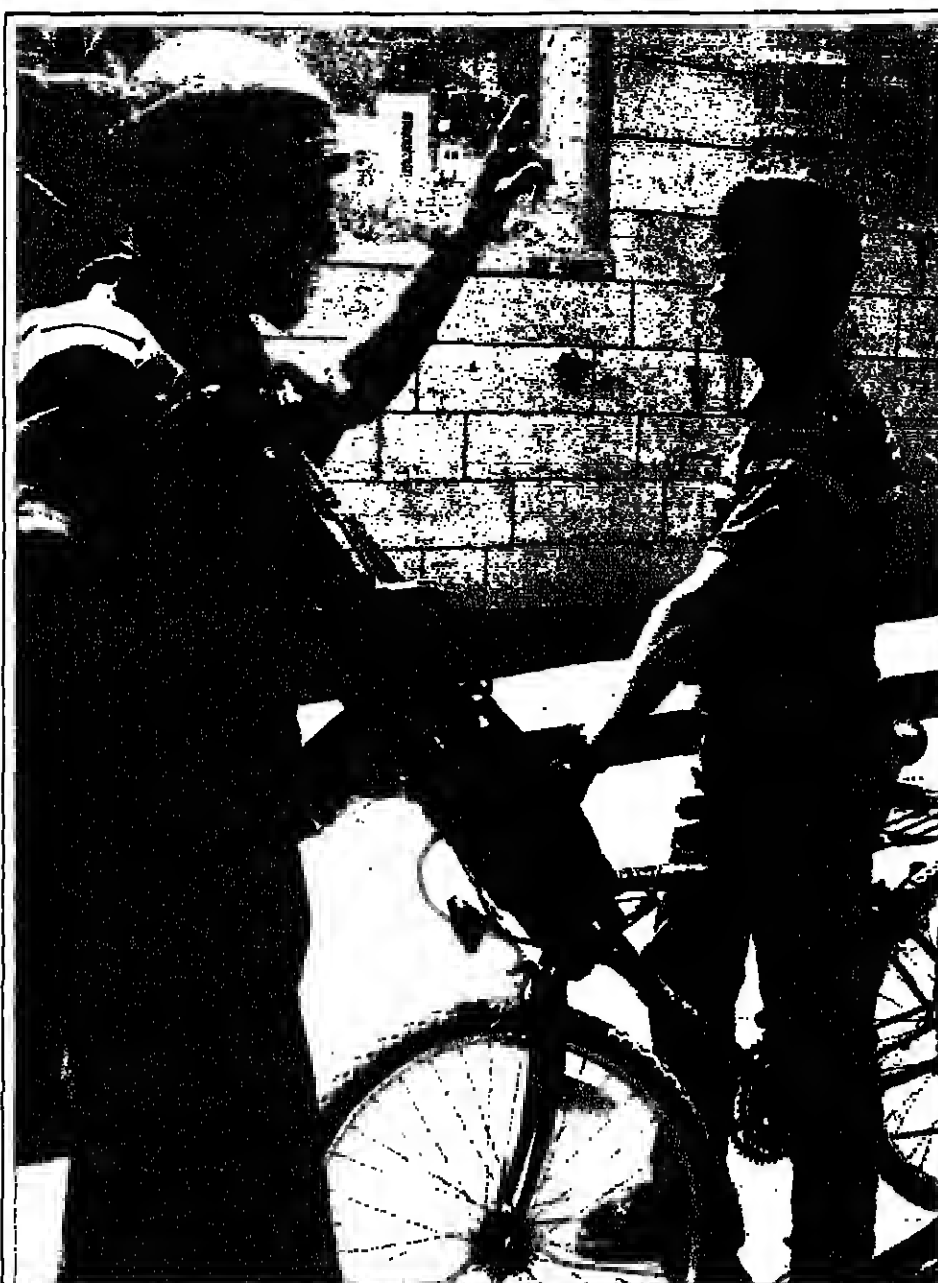
settler killed by suspected Palestinian attackers in the West Bank in August. Two Jews were shot dead earlier this month outside Yitzhar settlement near the Palestinian-ruled town of Nablus.

About 20,000 Palestinian residents, including Haddad, live in the area of Hebron which is under Israeli control. They are unable to leave their homes and businesses and schools in this part of the city are shut.

Witnesses said Israeli troops detained two Palestinians who were driving in Hebron on Sunday in violation of the curfew.

In another incident, Israeli troops shot at a Palestinian car when its driver broke through a checkpoint on the outskirts of Hebron. An Israeli police spokesman said troops were examining the driver's papers when he drove through.

The spokesman said soldiers later found the abandoned car by a roadside.



ORDERED BACK: An Israeli soldier Sunday tells a Palestinian to return to the Palestinian-controlled sector of Hebron. Additional Israeli troops were pulled into Hebron and a curfew clamped on Palestinians living in the Israeli-controlled sector of the city following last Thursday's killing of a Jewish settler in the Tel Romena settlement. Some 400 Jewish settlers live amid more than 100,000 Palestinians in the divided city (Reuters photo)

Rebels kill 8 Algerians, 5 Islamists shot

ALGIERS (R) — Muslim rebels in Algeria killed eight civilians in separate attacks on Friday and government troops shot dead five Islamists, newspapers reported on Sunday.

La Tribune daily said three people had their throats cut and were then beheaded by rebels who attacked their village in Sidi Boubekeur in the province of Saïda 400 km southwest of the capital Algiers.

"About a dozen men on horses attacked us with knives and axes. They cut the throat of my father and another. I escaped with my two brothers in a cave," the paper quoted the child of one of the victims as saying.

It said a third man was also killed and all three were beheaded by the Islamists.

The Arabic-language daily Al Afta said Muslim rebels killed three people at a fake roadblock some 130 km west of Algiers on Friday. A fourth person managed to escape with bullet wounds, it added.

It said "terrorists" — the term the authorities use to describe Muslim rebels — "shot and later cut the throats" of two civilians in Al Milia, 350 km east of Algiers.

The French-language Le Matin said government troops killed five armed Islamists after they attacked their hideout in Boumcred, about 70 km east of Algiers.

Egypt's FM arrives unexpectedly in Syria

DAMASCUS (AP) — Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa arrived here Sunday in a surprise visit for talks with President Hafez Assad and other senior officials.

Musa, whose visit was not announced in advance, was received at the airport by his Syrian counterpart, Farouk Al Sharara, and other Syrian diplomats.

Musa met with Assad and delivered a message from Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Egypt's Middle East News Agency said.

Details of the message were not immediately known, but Arab diplomats in Cairo said Musa is preparing for a visit to Mubarak to Syria which is to take place soon.

Mubarak is expected to press for an international conference on the Middle East, said the diplomats, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Syrian media have been critical of holding such a conference, saying it could give Israel a pretext to back off from the terms of the peace process set up by the 1991 Madrid Conference.

Musa and Al Sharara met separately and discussed bilateral and regional issues, the stalled Arab-Israeli peace talks and the recent U.S. strikes against Afghanistan and Sudan.

Syria is also linked by an Israeli decision to build 4,800 new homes in four settlements in the occupied Golan Heights. The construction of the settlements "is tangible evidence that Israel does not want peace," Al Sharara told reporters.

"The Israeli government is looking for all possible obstacles in order not to resume negotiations from the point where they last reached."

Militant settler confronts Weizman

HEBRON (R) — A militant Jewish settler confronted Israeli President Ezer Weizman on Sunday in the West Bank, calling him a spy in remarks some people said recalled incident that preceded Yitzhak Rabin's assassination.

"You are a spy, a danger to the public and need to be institutionalized either in prison or hospital," settler Baruch Marzel, a former member of the outlawed extremist Kach

movement, shouted at Weizman.

Weizman, on his way to a condolence call in Hebron where a Jewish settler was stabbed to death by a suspected Palestinian last Thursday, called Marzel's accusation a "lie and fabrication."

Eitan Haber, a top adviser to Rabin until the Israeli leader's assassination in 1995 by a right-wing Jew opposed to ceding land to Arabs, said the statements were reminiscent

of those before Rabin's murder.

"Things are starting to remind me of... the incident and the harsh statements that were said in his [Rabin's] time," Haber told Israel Radio.

The Israeli cabinet, which was convening during Marzel's verbal assault, denounced the comments in a statement but it was unclear whether any action would be taken against him.

JORDAN TELEVISION

TEL 4773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:10Cartoon — Highlander
15:30 Drama — The Genie From Down Under
16:00Drama — Neighbours
16:30Doc. — Last Frontiers
17:00 French Programme — Thalassa
18:00Acapulco Bay
19:00Le Journal
19:15 French Programme — Science Actualites
19:30News headlines
19:35 Comedy — Hope and Gloria
20:00Prespective
20:30What's Your Poison
21:10Good Guys, Bad Guys
22:00News in English
22:30 Mini-series — Dead Man's Walk (pt. II)
23:59End of T.X.

PRAYER TIMES

04:38Fajr
06:00(Sunrise) Duha
12:38Dhuhr
16:16Asr
19:16Maghreb
20:38Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swifteh, Tel. 5920740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.
4632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590
Terra Sancta Church Tel.
4622366

Anglican Church

Tel. 4624533/4624811
St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 4771751

Amman International Church

Tel. 5865897

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel.

5688404

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel.

5811295

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel.

4654932

St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel.

5661757

Church of the Annunciation Tel.

4637440

Greek Orthodox Church Tel.

4646138

Church of Presentation, Swifteh Tel.

5920146

The Uniate Catholic Church Tel.

4624757

The English-Langue Catholic Parish Tel.

4614190

Evangelical Free Church Tel.

4892679

The Baptist Church Tel.

4629052

The Armenian Catholic Church Tel.

4771331

prevail with temperatures around

average and winds northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, it will be hot, winds northerly moderate, and seas calm

Min/Max temp.

Amman.....19/33

Aqaba.....26/38

Deserts.....18/26

Jordan Valley.....25/39

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 33 Aqaba 39 Humidity

readings: Amman 35 per cent.

Aqaba 27 per cent.

Following are the highest temperatures expected today in the following areas:

Ajloun.....28

Jerash.....24

Um Qays.....34

Madaba.....32

Petra.....36

Dead Sea.....40

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Bilal Sayyid.....4890280

Dr. Awni Hawamdeh.....532350

Dr. Tawfik Qub'ala.....4623029

Dr. Ghaleb Zawaideh

4126011

Firas pharmacy.....5661912

Al Asena pharmacy.....5347652

Nuroukh pharmacy.....4623672

Radim Jordan.....4636731

Al Salam pharmacy.....4640455

Yacoub pharmacy.....4640455

Shmeisani pharmacy.....4637691

Shmeisani pharmacy.....5347652

IRBID:

Dr. Ali Shuqatri.....7100069

Al Quds pharmacy.....4637691

ZARQA:

Dr. Akram Haddad.....485550

Khalilch pharmacy.....985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre.....4637111

Civil Defence Department.....5661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue.....4630341

Civil Defence Emergency.....199

Rescue Police 192.....4621111

Fire Brigade.....4617101

Blood Bank.....4775121

Highway Police.....5343402

Traffic Police.....4896390

Public Security Dept.....4630321

Price Complaints.....5661176

Water & Sewerage Complaints.....4896390

Amman Municipality Complaints.....4787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance).....121

Overseas Calls.....010250

Central Amman Telephone

Repairs.....4623101

Abdali Tel. Repairs.....5661101

Jordan Televis.....4773111

Radim Jordan.....4773111

Water Authority.....5680100

Electricity Authority.....5815615

Electric Power Co.....4636381

RJ Flight Information.....44-53200

Queen Alia Int. Airport.....44-53201

ZARQA:

Dr. Akram Haddad.....485550

Khalilch pharmacy.....985417

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery.....5921191

The Islamic Abdi.....5661317

Hussein Medical Centre.....5896856

Luzulu.....4630195

Khalili Maternity.....4644281/6

Akileh Maternity.....4642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity.....4642362

Milhas, J. Amman.....4636140

Palestine, Shmeisani.....5647071

Shmeisani Hospital.....5343444

University Hospital.....5667227/9

Al-Muasher Hospital.....5661646

Al-Bushra.....4775111/26

Italian, Al-Muhajreen.....4777101/3

Amny, Marka.....4891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital.....5902240/50

Amal Hospital.....4891611/15

ZARQA National Hospital

10:45.....New Delhi (RJ)

10:55.....Beirut (RJ)

17:00.....Cairo (RJ)

17:30.....London (RJ)

17:40.....New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

18:15.....Istanbul (RJ)

18:45.....Kuwait (RJ)

19:40.....Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)

20:15.....Bangkok (RJ)

02:45.....Dhahran (add) (RJ)

02:55.....Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)

02:55.....Aqaba: Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department in the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. 44-53200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone 44-53200.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

08:05.....Sanaa (RJ)

09:30.....Damascus (RJ)

09:30.....Jeddah (RJ)

10:20.....Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

10:20.....Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

10:20.....Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

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10:20.....Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

10:20.....Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

10:20.....Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

10:20.....Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

Abu Nidal dying of cancer in Cairo hospital — paper

BEIRUT (AFP) — Palestinian chief Abu Nidal, wanted in the West for scores of attacks, is dying of cancer in a private hospital in Cairo, an Arabic newspaper on Sunday quoted Palestinian sources as saying.

Al Sharq Al Awsat, published in London, said that Sabri Al Banna, better known by his nom de guerre of Abu Nidal (Father of the Struggle), "is under care in a private hospital in Cairo after his health has grown worse."

Egyptian authorities have formally denied Abu Nidal, 61, is on their territory.

Cairo made the denial after another Arabic daily published in London, Al Hayat, reported last week that Abu Nidal had been arrested by Egyptian security services.

Washington has blamed Abu Nidal's group for killing or injuring almost 900 people in attacks in 20 countries since 1974.

Al Sharq Al Awsat said that "Abu Nidal's condition is desperate and there is very little hope that he will recover from cancer."

Associates of Abu Nidal here, including Palestinian general services director Amin Hindi, who is connected with the Palestinian National

Authority, have contacted Egyptian authorities over Abu Nidal's whereabouts, the paper reported.

Abu Nidal is the sworn enemy of Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), which he says has "surrendered" to the Israelis in the peace process.

He is the founder of the Palestinian opposition Fatah Revolutionary Council which has claimed lethal attacks around the world, mostly against Israelis and PLO partisans, but also against Jews in Western Europe and against moderate Arab states.

Washington has said that in recent years Abu Nidal's organisation has become a gun-for-hire by various Arab regimes which have backed him.

One of his most notorious operations was the December 1985 attacks at Rome and Vienna airports on EL Al ticket counters which killed 18 people and wounded 120.

Abu Nidal's group is thought to number several hundred plus in Lebanon and have an overseas support structure. He is said to have lived in Iraq, Syria, Algeria, Libya, and Sudan.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Chad president arrives in Libya

CAIRO (AP) — Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi met with Chadian President Idriss Deby, who flew into the Libyan capital in violation of U.N. sanctions, state-run television said. Deby told the TV Saturday that he came to Libya to check on Qadhafi's health after the Libyan leader underwent a hip operation in July. Libyan television and radio said Deby arrived by air at Tripoli airport direct from the Chadian capital, Njamena, on Saturday, violating U.N. sanctions on Libya. The sanctions prohibit air travel to and from the country except for humanitarian reasons.

Saddam approves prisoner releases

BAGHDAD (R) — President Saddam Hussein has ratified a proposal to free Iraqi prisoners who have served half of their sentences, Baghdad newspapers said on Sunday. They said that the decision was made during a cabinet meeting chaired by Saddam on Saturday. "The council [of ministers] has studied a proposal to free prisoners who had completed half of their imprisonment provided they pay fines for the rest of their sentences," the ruling Baath Party newspaper Al Thawra said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Regent confers medal upon general

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Sunday conferred the Al Hussein Medal for Distinguished Performance of the Second Order upon Brigadier General Ghaleb Abdul Nabi in appreciation of his efforts and services as a military adviser to the Regent.

Prince Ghazi congratulates Gharraibeh

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Prince Ghazi, His Majesty King Hussein's adviser on tribal affairs, Sunday congratulated Minister of Education Fawzi Gharraibeh on his recent appointment.

Winter time begins Sept. 18

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan will switch to winter time at midnight on Thursday, September 18, according to a communiqué issued Sunday by Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh. Amman time will be two hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).

Delegation leaves for Sudan

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation from the Ministry of Agriculture leaves today for Sudan to inspect the site of a Jordanian livestock project and to visit Sudan's veterinary, drug manufacturing institutions. Mukhlis Amman, head of the ministry's Livestock and Pasture Department and head of the delegation, said the group was expected to meet with Sudanese officials and discuss the prospect of Jordan importing live sheep directly from Sudan by sea in implementation of an earlier memorandum of understanding.

Survey on unemployment

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Labour Mohamed Mahdi Fakhri on Sunday said his ministry is conducting a survey to determine the actual number of persons seeking employment. Farhan said the ministry's Planning Committee decided to distribute questionnaires at post offices throughout the Kingdom. He added that the results will be presented to a special committee to determine suitable solutions for unemployment.

WHAT'S GOING ON

- FILMS**
 - * Two films entitled "Truly Madly Deeply" and "Waterproof" at the British Cinema, Jabbal Amman, on Tuesday Aug. 25 at 7:00 p.m. and Wednesday Aug. 26 at 6:00 p.m. respectively.
- SUMMER 98 FESTIVAL**
 - * "Summer 98" cultural activities at Darat Al Funun, Jabbal Weibdeh, to last until Sept. 30, include:
- EXHIBITIONS**
 - * Graphic art from Lebanon (south hall), works by Lebanese artist Youssef Aoun (middle hall), works by Jordanian artist Sabah Haddad (north hall) at the Main House.
 - * Works by Iraqi artist Samer Usama (main hall), works by Jordanian artist Said Haddad (small hall) at the Blue House.
 - * Installation works by Jordanian artist Samia Zaru at the Byzantine Church.
 - * Exhibition of photographs "Memory of a Place" by Jordanian artist Hussein Darwish at the Museum.
- EXHIBITIONS**
 - * Exhibition of wrought iron furniture by Jordanian artist Salim Al-Bandak at Al-Baidar Hall, Kan Zaman village (Tel. 5862531), until Sept. 17.
 - * Summer display of products at the Jordan Design and Trade Centre/Noor Al Hussein Foundation, off Wadi Saqra (Tel. 569-9141/2), until Aug. 31.
 - * "Miniatures in Humanities and Environment" by Walid Nasrallah at Odeh Art Gallery, Um Utheina, until Aug. 25 (Tel. 5526932).



CHRISTENING IN JORDAN RIVER: Franciscan Father Michel Piccerello (R) baptises a four-month-old Italian baby girl named Chiara Puschnitar Sunday on the eastern bank of the Jordan River, the same spot where Christians believe Jesus Christ was baptised by John the Baptist. It is the first such christening in the waters since 1967, when Israel occupied the West Bank. Jordan has ambitious plans to promote this ritual site into a major tourist attraction toward the end of the 2nd millennium. Nearly five million tourists are expected to visit the birthplace of Jesus within the next two years (AFP photo)

Inmates' families concerned over transfers

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government has begun moving inmates from the Salt Centre and Rehabilitation Centre to another facility in the desert area of Jafer to ease congestion, officials said Sunday.

However, the gradual move has raised concern among inmates' relatives, especially women and the less affluent, who say they will have to spend more money to make the 300-kilometre trip to Jafer, near the border with Saudi Arabia.

"We learned 20 days ago that 14 prisoners were transferred from Salt to Jafer Centre and that more will be on the way," said Deputy Mohamed Azaideh, head of the Lower House's Public Freedoms Committee.

But Azaideh told the Jordan Times that he had "not

received any complaints from their families."

Azaideh urged authorities to improve living conditions at the Salt centre, including easing congestion, after a visit to the complex three months ago.

The spokesman of the House's Public Freedoms Committee, Assaf Assaf, said he understood from other government officials that the transfer was a temporary move until the Salt centre was upgraded. But officials hinted the decision was final.

"Jafer has become a suitable centre following its renovation and can house some inmates who will be given better services and will enjoy a place that corresponds with their dignity," said one official.

A 29-year-old female resident of Salt whose husband is serving a four-year prison for plotting subversive acts said she could not make the long trip to visit her husband at

Jafer, a high-security prison that used to house political dissidents in the 1950s and 1960s.

"I always go alone to visit my husband, but now it is going to become impossible for me to go and see him on my own," said Thawrah Ismat Shukri, a mother of four.

Several families of inmates at the Salt centre said prisoners had begun a hunger strike to protest against the transfer, claims dismissed by Assaf as "rumours."

An official source who requested anonymity also denied there was a hunger strike.

"The committee did not receive any information of that sort and we are intending to visit the Jafer Centre to check its conditions and to see if it is fit to receive inmates," Assaf said.

"If the committee feels that the Jafer prison is not fit for housing inmates, then we will

New government favours relaxed application of press law — minister

By Amy Henderson
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A senior official yesterday played down expectations among the press corps that the government would lobby against the new press and publications law and that the law would be abrogated by a Royal Decree.

However, he indicated that officials would opt for a soft implementation of the law.

"The press and publications law has been through all [constitutional] stages, and now awaits the Regent's signature," said Information Minister Nasser Judeh. "When and if this happens, it will be law. We have to respect our institutions."

The press and publications law was endorsed last week by the Senate, which adopted the

54-article law as amended by the Lower House of Parliament. A Royal Decree will bring the law into force. According to the Constitution, if the King rejects the law, it must be sent back to Parliament for further amendments.

Judeh, who left his post as head of the Jordan Radio and Television Corporation to assume his ministerial position, told the Jordan Times that the new government is not in favour of a "stringent" application of the law.

"His Majesty King Hussein indicated that he wants dialogue among the people, the government and Parliament, not bitterness and anger," Judeh said. "Anxiety and alarm do not solve our problems. We can solve our problems through dialogue with all parties, including the press and

the opposition."

The relationship between the public and the government of Abdul Salam Majali, which resigned last week, was characterised by an ever-growing acrimony that commenced with the former government's introduction in 1997 of temporary amendments to the 1993 Press and Publications Law ahead of parliamentary elections. Confidence in the government reached an all-time low with the less than transparent handling of the recent water pollution scandal.

In his letter of designation to Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh, King Hussein wrote: "Telling the truth and acting with transparency in presenting the facts to the public are among the most important duties of the government."

The reaction of the press

corps to the new appointees has been overall positive, and many have been pleased by the appointment of Judeh, a familiar figure with a media background.

However, they said they were waiting for a gesture to the media to ease their anxiety over the new law.

A major indication of the government's intentions will be the leeway granted to director of the Press and Publications Department (PPD), journalists said.

The press corps holds the department responsible for much of the initiative against the press and for language in the new legislation that invests wide authority in the PPD director to ban and censor publications as well as initiate court proceedings against them.

'Royal directives to serve as guidelines for new government'

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh leaves today for the U.S. to meet with His Majesty King Hussein and to convey the new government's pledge to implement the Royal directives in the letter of designation. Information Minister Nasser Judeh said Sunday.

In a statement to the press, Judeh said the King's directives, focusing on domestic affairs at the economic, social and media levels and transparency in governmental dealings with the public, will serve as guidelines for the new government.

He noted that the King has asked the government to avoid taking abrupt decisions and

instead allow for ample time for dialogue and study.

Judeh added that the formation of a new government does not necessarily mean cancelling the previous government's decisions, as Jordan is a state of institutions.

In reply to a question about the U.S. attack on Sudan, the minister said he was not aware of Jordanian interests in the destroyed Al Shifa pharmaceutical plant.

"We are trying to verify information on Jordanian firms associated with the plant in an advisory capacity in the first stage of the plant's construction and also the presence of a Jordanian citizen employed in marketing the plant's products," said Judeh.

Judeh also announced that Senate President Zeid Rifai is to lead Jordan's delegation to the Non-Aligned Nations conference, due to open in South Africa on Sept. 3.

The information minister said King Hussein asked that Rifai head the delegation, which will include Foreign Minister Abdul Ilah Khateib, Jordan's ambassadors to the U.N. and South Africa, and the head of the Economic Department at the Foreign Ministry.

Rifai and Tarawneh discussed the topics on the meeting's agenda at a meeting Sunday, during which the two sides also discussed coordination between the executive and the legislative authorities.

5,000 Iraqi students receive exemption on residency permits

By Mohammad Ben Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The government has allowed 5,000 Iraqi students to study in Jordan during 1998-99 scholastic year by exempting them from the need to obtain residency permits, an official said Sunday.

The decision was made by former Interior Minister Nasser Rashid hours before he lost his portfolio in last Thursday's change of government.

"The decision to let Iraqi students continue their educa-

tion was taken on humanitarian grounds in line with the universal right to education," Interior Ministry Secretary General Hashim Sabbagh told the Jordan Times.

According to Ministry of Education regulations, non-Jordanians — except for citizens from Lebanon, Syria and the Gulf countries — must have residence permits to enrol in private or public educational institutions in Jordan.

Last April, the Ministry of Interior exempted around 5,000 Iraqi students from the ministry's rules on the

grounds that they were originally admitted into Jordanian schools under the precondition that they work on obtaining a permit.

However, most students and their families say it has become almost impossible for Iraqis to obtain residencies in Jordan.

Jordan has become home for over 120,000 Iraqis since the 1990-91 Gulf crisis forced them to flee Baghdad because of economic turmoil or political instability. But only 30,000 of them have residencies in Jordan.

Air traffic controllers, CAA at odds over safety and management issues

By Francesca Ciriaci
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein's recent revelation of a case of negligence that could have resulted in a mid-air collision earlier this year has drawn attention to the issue of national air safety and traffic management.

"We are really grateful to His Majesty for having pointed out the major problems that we are facing and the need for change," said Saleh Ibrahim, head of the Jordan Air Traffic Controllers Association (JATCA).

While they condemn their colleagues' negligence, JATCA members say the incident points to the need to identify and correct more widespread problems plaguing the entire system.

"What happened is unacceptable," said Ibrahim, a retired air traffic controller with 35 years of service ranging from chief controller to supervisor and chief of the rescue coordination centre to assistant director of operations at Amman, Queen Alia International (QAIA), and Agaba airports.

"But from what we have gathered, it was more of an administrative rather than a mere technical error."

JATCA's approximately 120 members complain of a deficit in managers with air traffic control (ATC) qualifications and experience, an allegation the Civil Aviation Authority

(CAA) strongly rejects. "This is totally incorrect," replied CAA Director Jasser Ziyad.

The CAA also disagrees with JATCA's argument that responsibility for the near disaster should be collectively shared by the ATC supervisor and the area control chief on duty at the time, together with the assistant director general for air navigation and transport and the assistant director for operations at QAIA.

"It would be like punishing a general because one soldier fell asleep while on duty," Capt. Ziyad said.

The King's frank exposure of the incident spurred CAA officials to disclose details of the incident.

In a letter he wrote on Aug. 7 from the Mayo Clinic in the U.S. to HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, the King said "the recurring incidents of negligence, such as the near miss of two huge aircraft over Amman a few months ago, would have been a catastrophe that was avoided by God's grace."

"Some air traffic control officials had decided to leave their place of work to pray, almost causing a tragic and horrific catastrophe, not to mention that such behaviour does not please God or man," said the King, a certified pilot.

After the publication of the King's letter, CAA sources clarified that the near air collision between a Gulf Airways 737 coming from Jeddah and a

Royal Jordanian Tristar occurred in late January. Ziyad told the Jordan Times in an interview that the incident was discovered by CAA officials two weeks after its occurrence, during a routine inspection of the records.

"We discovered it ourselves and we were transparent in admitting the mistake as soon as we found out," Ziyad said.

The incident, which never appeared in the press before the King's revelation, was reported directly to the Monarch in late February, by which time corrective and disciplinary measures against the responsible air traffic controllers had already been taken.

Capt. Ziyad reiterated on Sunday that the CAA drafted an 11-point recommendation to limit similar human errors in the future, and, while most of these recommendations have already been implemented, others are still being taken.

CAA officials stress that such mistakes happen everywhere in the world and that the possibility of human error always exists.

They also cite tight financial constraints that compel the CAA to operate with minimum manpower requirements. But the JATCA insists the three responsible controllers should not be the only ones punished.

"According to international standards set by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), each position is supervised, so that

the whole ATC system could be considered as a chain of people who watch each other," Ibrahim explained.

"Why should only those three be held responsible?"

Complaining of not having been invited to take part in the investigation and not having been taken into account in drafting the sector's development plans since its establishment in 1996, the JATCA urges cooperation and coordination with the CAA.

"The CAA has to understand that coordination with JATCA is a must."

"We are looking forward to working hand-in-hand with the CAA towards the goal of zero accidents, but the achievement of this goal will remain a dream if we do not join efforts and our proposals continue to go unheeded," said Ibrahim.

He stressed that at the present there is not even an agreement between the JATCA and the CAA to settle disputes and conduct investigations, regulate membership, set qualifications for staff at all levels, including managerial staff, regulate legal liability, and fix remuneration and related issues such as public holidays and retirement conditions.

Ziyad replied that investigations such as the one into the January incident are closed, and "in similar situations in other countries, nobody is ever invited to participate."

He countered the JATCA's complaints by saying that the

association itself has never approached the CAA or the Ministry of Transport.

"If they do not make the first step, how can they expect others to involve them?"

Air traffic controllers have asked for more recognition, higher benefits, and increased salaries. Above all, they want a professional status which has not yet been granted to them.

After strict selection procedures and demanding training to achieve the highest positions, ATC personnel are dealt with by the state under the same regulations applying to all civil servants, the JATCA said.

"We work under international obligations. We deal with international passengers and international standards," Ibrahim pointed out.

"A pilot is responsible for the lives of his/her own passengers, but we are responsible for the lives of all passengers in our skies at any one time," he added.

According to international standards, ATC personnel must possess a high level of self-confidence, be action-oriented, and have good decision-making and abstract-reasoning skills.

Jordanian ATC personnel receive the basic two-year diploma at Queen Noor College as tower controllers, after which they attend a one-year on-the-job training programme before being graded as air traffic controllers.

After two-three years of

experience, Ibrahim explained, air traffic controllers can move to a four-six month "approach control" course, usually followed by several months of on-the-job training at the operations centre at QAIA.

After another exam, ATC personnel are rated as approach controllers.

The last steps include area and radar courses, and related on-the-job training.

At the end of this four-five

year training cycle, Ibrahim said, air traffic controllers can aspire to a salary ranging from JD180-350, including allowances.

"The International Labour Organisation (ILO) classifies ATC personnel as 'associate professionals' in the same category as pilots and ship officers. Remuneration should reflect this internationally recognised status and be commensurate with the requirements," Ibrahim said.

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Kohl confident of comeback election win

DORTMUND, Germany (R) — German Chancellor Helmut Kohl entered the home stretch of his reelection campaign Sunday confidently vowing to win a fifth term despite a poll showing him falling further behind.

Kohl said he was unconcerned about voter surveys showing him four to eight percentage points behind Social Democrat challenger Gerhard Schröder with just five weeks left before the Sept. 27 election.

"I am quite sure we will win the election," Kohl told ZDF television. "The election is still far from decided. The mood has clearly improved and everyone can sense that. A lot of voters today make up their minds late. Many won't decide until the final three or four weeks."

The chancellor was launching his final "hot phase" of his campaign with a mass rally before an expected crowd of 18,000 Sunday afternoon at the Westphalia concert hall in Dortmund, an industrial city 130 km north of Bonn.

Schröder and the SPD kicked off their final drive with rallies Saturday in Berlin, Munich and Bonn.

Campaigning effectively began months ago, but the two parties have focused their firepower on the final five weeks.

Kohl is seeking a record fifth four-year term while the SPD, out of power since 1982, is eager to end his long reign.

The SPD put up posters around the Dortmund area welcoming the Kohl supporters to "the start of the farewell tour". The giant posters showed Kohl's backside.

Even though Kohl has consistently trailed Schröder in voter surveys for six months, the once-comfortable gap has narrowed in recent weeks and the race has turned into one of the tightest in decades.

But, an opinion poll by the Emnid research institute that appears in today's edition of Der Spiegel newsmagazine shows the SPD's lead widening again to four points, 42 to 38.

Several Emnid polls in August had shown Schröder's lead dropping to three points. Other surveys show the SPD ahead by four to 10 points. But another Emnid poll found that around 50 per cent of the voters had not yet made up their minds.

"There is still a lot of work to do and we will fight for every vote," Kohl said in the ZDF interview, that was to be broadcast Sunday evening.

The Emnid poll, conducted between Aug. 18 and 19 and based on interviews with 1,004 voters, found Kohl's approval ratings were at 42 per cent, up four from June, but still well behind Schröder's 66 per cent.

Frustration at unemployment, which is stuck at levels above 10 per cent and hit a postwar high of close to five million earlier this year, has cost Kohl support from many voters who are drifting to Schröder, a pragmatic pro-business centrist.

Kohl, known for his comebacks against overture confident opponents, is pinning his hopes of confounding the polls on a palpable recovery of the economy and on falling unemployment.

He also knows that postwar German voters have never ousted an incumbent chancellor.

After the Dortmund rally, he will tour the country of some 80 million people for dozens of rallies in coming weeks.



German Chancellor and chairman of the Christian Democrats CDU Helmut Kohl (right) and Finance Minister and chairman of Kohl's sister party Christian Social Union party (CSU) Theo Waigel wave to some 10,000 supporters prior to the official opening of the election campaign of CDU and CSU in Dortmund's sports arena Westfalenhalle. Kohl, the West's longest serving leader is running for his fifth term in Germany's general elections on Sept. 27 while his social democratic challenger Gerhard Schröder is leading latest opinion polls (Reuters photo)

Thousands defy threats to protest Cambodian elections and Hun Sen

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — Thousands of Cambodian opposition supporters, defying threats and fears of violence, gathered Sunday to protest the results of last month's elections and demand strongman Hun Sen be removed from power.

They later set a seven-day deadline for the government to address their grievances before staging another mass demonstration.

A raucous crowd of more than 7,000 crammed into the parking lot of the capital's Olympic Stadium to insist the people had been robbed of the July 26 polls and that the powerful second prime minister must go.

There were widespread fears of violence after one person died in a grenade attack late Thursday outside the interior ministry, apparently aimed at leading dissident Sam Rainsy.

But there were no incidents and police kept a low profile. Sam Rainsy's self-named party, which estimated the crowd at between 10,000 and 12,000, said later that 28 trucks carrying supporters to the demonstration had been stopped by authorities outside Phnom Penh.

The would-be protesters were forced off the trucks and some turned back, but others continued on into the city on foot or by motorcycle taxi, the party said in a statement.

Authorities had initially banned the rally, hinting that Sam Rainsy planned to stage violence and blame it on the government. But under a last-minute compromise a stationary protest at the stadium was allowed while a planned march afterwards was cancelled.

However, protesters did in fact walk once around the stadium on surrounding streets, incurring the anger of police officials who said it violated the agreement.

Late Sunday, the opposition, clearly pleased with the turnout at the rally, said it would cancel a large march and rally scheduled for Monday and would instead stage a large 24-hour vigil in a park across from parliament.

A spokesman said the vigil, at the site of last year's deadly March 30 grenade attack on a Sam Rainsy-led rally that killed at least 16 people, would likely continue for a week until the deadline expired.

At the stadium, Sam Rainsy and officials from the royalist FUNCINPEC party of deposed co-premier Prince Norodom Ranariddh and at least three other smaller parties urged the crowd to reject the results of the elections.

"We will not tolerate this kind of theft," Sam Rainsy said, once again accusing the government of trying to kill him Thursday when he went to the interior ministry to guard allegedly unprotected ballot papers.

"They tried to kill me but Sam Rainsy will never die. We will not stop our demonstrations, tomorrow we will march to ... show the world we disagree with the results,"

Many in the crowd carried signs and banners denouncing the election process.

"Stop the election coverage, recount the votes," "Our votes were stolen," and "Respect the people's will," were among the most prominent.

Official preliminary returns show strongman Hun Sen's de facto ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) winning the polls

with 64 seats in parliament, a majority but not enough to form a government on its own.

The opposition, which stands to take the rest of the seats, claims the CPP victory was tainted by fraud and has refused to enter coalition negotiations unless its complaints are heard and Hun Sen is removed from power.

"This is a commitment to serve the will of the people who have voted on July 26, this will has been stolen," FUNCINPEC secretary general Tol Lah said to resounding cheers from the crowd.

He also urged the international community, which, with the exception of the United States, has largely supported the election, to reserve judgement until the complaints are resolved.

"America is the only hope for the Cambodian people," read one sign, apparently referring to highly critical comments from several prominent U.S. congressmen directed at Hun Sen, the government and the election.

All the opposition's complaints have so far been rejected by authorities and the appeals process has been widely criticised since the Constitutional Council has refused to hear many of them.

"The international community should see clearly the will of the people today," Tol Lah said, speaking on behalf of Prince Ranariddh whom Hun Sen ousted as first prime minister last year.

The Constitutional Council, Cambodia's highest appeals body, is expected to rule on the few complaints it has accepted around Aug. 29. Final official returns are to be released then.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Estrada temporarily closes aid office after fatal stampede

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — President Joseph Estrada ordered the temporary closure of a government aid centre Sunday after two women were trampled to death as hundreds of people stampeded to get forms for jobs, food and medicine. Estrada also promised to reduce the huge throng of impoverished people gathered at the centre, located near Manila's presidential palace. Saturday morning, hundreds of aid-seekers abandoned long lines and surged towards a gate where application forms were being handed out. In addition to the two deaths, dozens of other people were injured in the melee. Estrada had opened the Presidential Action Centre shortly after he took office on June 30 to highlight his administration's concern over the welfare of millions of poor Filipinos. The centre was an attempt to follow up on a campaign pledge to combat widespread poverty in the Philippines. The president, who first came to prominence as a movie star, visited the suburban home of one of the dead women Sunday and promised jobs and scholarships to her surviving family members.

'Second Spice Girl pregnant'

LONDON (R) — "Scary Spice" Melanie Brown is the second member of the chart-topping Spice Girls to become pregnant. The News of the World reported Sunday. The newspaper said Mel B and her fiancé, Jimmy Golzar, plan to marry as soon as the Spice Girls finish their American tour this week. "I'm not saying yes and I'm not saying no," the paper quoted Mel, 23, as saying. But her father Martin was quoted as saying: "How did you find out? You're the first." Last week, newspapers reported "Posh Spice" Victoria Adams is three months pregnant but is not planning to leave the group. Victoria, 24, and her fiancé, Manchester United and England soccer star David Beckham, were said to be thrilled and would marry after the baby was born, according to the Sun. Another band member, "Ginger Spice" Geri Halliwell, quit the group in June, but the News of the World said the four remaining singers have discussed their plans "and have decided that the band has a great future". They have topped the charts in 40 countries, with their first album selling nearly 20 million copies.

Befuddled Japanese arrested after wrong-way drive

TOKYO (R) — A 61-year-old Japanese man who apparently drank too much at a party was arrested Sunday after driving for 28 kilometres on the wrong side of a highway, police said. There were no accidents or injuries due to the incident, but police in Tochigi Prefecture, north of Tokyo, said late drivers had called them with reports of a car travelling at high speed on the wrong side of the Toboku Expressway. "We sent patrol cars out to intercept the man and he was arrested on suspicion of drunken driving," a police official told Reuters. Police said the driver, Toshio Yamamura of Ashikaga, made a U-turn after entering the expressway and was then trying to turn his car around. "I have not driven on the expressway all that often and I was trying to make another U-turn," police quoted Yamamura as saying.

Probe starts on U.S. fighter crash in Australia

MELBOURNE (R) — United States defence personnel Sunday began their investigation into the death of a U.S. marine pilot who crashed an F/A-18 Hornet jetfighter during a training exercise in Australia's outback last week. "I can confirm the pilot was killed in the crash. The Australian investigation team arrived Friday and U.S. investigators arrived this afternoon," an Australian Defence Force (ADF) spokesman said. The spokesman said the pilot was Major Michel Kudsin, 32, of Roseville, Michigan. Kudsin was stationed at a U.S. Marine Corps base at Iwakuni, Japan. The Hornet crashed late Thursday inside the ADF's Delamere bombing range about 370 km south of Darwin in the Northern Territory. The pilot was one of 60 stationed in Japan who were taking part in the Southern Frontier training exercise at Delamere, an annual event for the U.S. marine pilots.

Mapmakers shift middle Belgium to the right

BRUSSELS (R) — The geographic centre of Belgium has been officially moved following a new study of the country's topography. Belgian media reported Sunday. At a ceremony Saturday, the spot at Nil-Saint-Vincent-Saint-Martin, a village half-way between Brussels and the southern regional capital of Namur, was marked by the erection of a small pyramid. A study by French geographer Jean-Georges Affholder had found that the "old" centre, Itre, about 30 km to the west, was calculated without taking into account Belgium's eastern, German-speaking region, which became part of the country after World War I, newspaper Dimanche Matin reported.

Hurling rocks during Indian festival leaves 800 injured

NEW DELHI, India (AP) — An old custom of hurling rocks at each other during a local festival in northern India left some 800 people injured Sunday, a local news agency reported. Twenty-five persons were hospitalised in critical condition after residents of two rival villages hurled rocks at each other during the Gomar festival in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. United News of India news agency reported. The origin of the custom is not clear, but residents of the two villages near the town of Chhindwara, 750 kilometres south of New Delhi, consider it a sign of luck if they can conquer a tree at a local shrine in the face of the volley of stones. Every August, residents of the two villages line up across a river and hurl rocks and abuses at each other during the ceremony. Getting injured is considered a good omen. Once the ceremony is over, residents of both villages eat and rejoice together.

Priest shoots, kills attacker in church

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — A Roman Catholic priest shot dead a man during a scuffle in a church in Alexandria township in Johannesburg, police said Sunday. The 25-year-old victim ran into the church with a knife while the priest was conducting mass Saturday evening, a police spokesman said, and tried to stab him. The priest allegedly pulled out a gun and fired several shots at his assailant. Police have arrested the priest and are investigating a charge of murder.

Myanmar ignores opposition parliament pledge

YANGON (R) — Myanmar's military rulers Sunday ignored a pledge by the pro-democracy opposition to convene a parliament and accused foreign powers and their "lap-dogs" of trying to destroy the country.

The opposition National League for Democracy (NLD), led by 1991 Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi, issued its most defiant challenge yet to the government Friday by saying it would shortly call a "People's Parliament".

The NLD made the promise after the passing of its Friday deadline for the military to convene a parliament based on Myanmar's last polls in May 1990, which the NLD won handsomely.

State media have given no direct response to the NLD's pledge, but the English-language "New Light of Myanmar", a key voice for the military, showed no hint of compromise Sunday.

In an editorial headlined "No Disturbing the Peace", the daily said Myanmar was suffering a malaise as "neo-colonialists and their lap-dogs" were working for a recurrence of the pro-democracy uprising of 1988 which led to a crackdown on the opposition.

Pro-democracy supporters say several thousand people were killed by troops in the unrest 10 years ago. The government puts the death toll at a few dozen.

The newspaper said the foreigners would not succeed.

"However much the foreign masters may wish their puppets to dance to their tune of dissent and disaster, the forces who cherish peace, led by the State Peace and Development Council (military government), shall deny those perpetrators of doom the luxury of seeing the Union (of Myanmar) disintegrate," it said.

The NLD's promise of a parliament has raised political tensions already heightened by a marathon roadside protest by Suu Kyi in west Myanmar, which entered its 12th day Sunday.

The daughter of independence hero Aung San has been stuck since Aug. 12 in a minivan about 32 km outside Yangon. The government has refused to let her travel to the west of the country and she in turn has refused to return to Yangon.

The NLD said Friday Suu Kyi intended to hold out until the government released 97 NLD members detained since May.

But Sunday it said Suu Kyi was dehydrated, suffering from constipation and "might go into shock any time". It said her doctor had not been allowed to visit her Saturday.

By contrast, the government said in a statement Sunday that it had allowed her doctors "full access to her at any time" and had even provided an ambulance. It said it would take "all necessary action" to protect her and repeated that prominent people were in danger in some areas — the argu-

ment it has used for stopping her travelling.

The government statement said armed guerrillas of the Karen National Union (KNU) separatists might attack Suu Kyi. Diplomats doubted this, saying the KNU had supported her in the past.

Suu Kyi's roadside protest has drawn world attention to her party's demand for a parliament made up of members elected at the country's May 1990 polls. The NLD's victory at those elections was ignored by the government.

But the NLD's promise of a parliament puts the onus on it to deliver and takes some pressure off the military. The opposition action could result in it being outlawed, diplomats say.

An editorial in the Sunday Nation newspaper in Thailand, the main refuge for Myanmar political exiles in South East Asia, said the NLD's pledge put the ball back in Suu Kyi's court.

"All eyes are now on her next step," it said. "But she will have to hold true to her threat if she is to retain her credibility."

The newspaper noted the military had so far ridiculed Suu Kyi's protest. The military calls it a camping holiday and has sent her a beach umbrella and garden chairs.

"Uncl and unless there is a mass mobilisation of her supporters, the junta will be contented to treat her with kid gloves," the Sunday Nation said.

N. Korea reports widespread damage by rainstorms

SEOUL (AFP) — Rainstorms, strong winds and tidal waves pounded the west coast of famine-hit North Korea Sunday, causing widespread damage to crops, the North's official media said.

Emergency rescue operations were launched after a strong wind hit nearly all parts of the country early Sunday, said the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), monitored to Seoul.

"Many areas were hit by windstorm and downpour of more than 200 millimetres," the agency said, giving an unusually full and quick account of damage to crops.

The weather report came amid crucial U.S.-North Korea talks which began in New York last week to discuss a political thaw and possible new economic aid for the famine-stricken state.

North Korea has admitted some of its children are dying from starvation, urging Washington to lift economic sanctions to help increase international food aid for its famine-hit population.

U.N. officials have said food stocks had run out in the North, which was battered by a succession of annual natural disasters.

Sunday, winds of up to 18 metres per second

and rainfall caused "much damage" to agriculture along the west coast, submerging "thousands of hectares" of arable land and destroying rice, maize and other crops, KCNA said.

High tidal waves also inundated "thousands of hectares of paddy and non-paddy fields and damaged railways and motorways," the agency said.

The reclusive North also claimed its granaries had been damaged by "abnormal climatic phenomena" such as hail, cold weather and rainstorms since early July.

"Heavier rain fell in these

plains in a short time than in inland areas, causing much damage," it said.

During a few months of this year's rainy season, Kangwon province had 1,052 to 1,473 millimetres of rain, virtually the annual precipitation for the area, it said.

Aside from hail, cold weather was registered on the east coast between mid-July and early August, it said.

The agency claimed that the rice harvest in southern border areas would "decrease by more than 60 per cent." The yields of maize and other dry-field crops would also drop sharply in these

areas, it said.

"Damage in land administration, city management and other sectors of the national economy was also severe," it said, adding steps had been taken to increase agricultural production and to produce "substitute food."

The agency also said North Koreans were still short of food because of natural disasters and Washington's continued economic blockade.

North Korea and the United States Friday began their first direct talks in five months in New York to discuss North Korean demands for an end to

decades-old U.S. sanctions.

The agenda also included plans for a resumption of talks to broker a permanent inter-Korean peace and U.S. suspicions that Pyongyang has reactivated its nuclear capacity, officials said. The talks will resume Monday.

Under a landmark 1994 accord, Pyongyang agreed to freeze its suspect nuclear programme in return for two light-water reactors. But Pyongyang has threatened to restart its nuclear programme unless the U.S. makes good on promised deliveries of fuel oil.

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World News



Chinese soldiers form a human flood barrier to plug holes in a dyke on the northern edge of Harbin. Floodwaters continued to lap around China's northeast city of Harbin as tens of thousands of troops and civilians were reinforcing barricades to prevent a disaster (Reuters photo)

Yangtze rising upstream, more flooding feared in central China

BELJING (AP) — Water levels upstream on the Yangtze River rose Sunday to their highest of the year, threatening more flooding downstream where soggy dikes have begun to crack.

The government, meanwhile, announced a ban on logging in western Sichuan province along the upper reaches of the river to curb severe soil erosion.

Excessive logging of hill-sides is partly to blame for the worst floods on the Yangtze in 44 years. Heavy rains this summer have washed off the denuded hills instead of soaking in, causing rivers to choke up with silt and rise.

River "levels" dropped slowly on the lower and middle reaches of the Yangtze Sunday after another crest passed. But the river was expected to crest again in flood danger zones by Tuesday, state radio reported.

It said the Yangtze Sunday was at its highest level yet upstream at Chongqing, a

main industrial hub in southwestern China.

Downriver in the city of Jiujiang, in south China's Jiangxi province, 300,000 soldiers and armed police patrolled up embankments. Officials warned dikes protecting Jiujiang and other cities were softening and cracking after weeks of pressure from high water levels.

The heavily populated Yangtze River basin has been hardest hit by the summer's floods. At least 2,000 people have died nationwide, but the toll is expected to rise. Millions have fled their homes.

The state-run Xinhua News Agency Sunday reported "thousands" have died in the floods, but gave no updated figure. The agency reported at least 19 people died in Sichuan recently in flooding caused by torrential rains.

The government, reluctant to report bad news, has not updated the death toll in more than two weeks. Since

then, floods in the northeast have washed out villages and threatened major industrial centres and the country's main oil field.

Flooding along the Yangtze has affected 240 million people, about one-fifth of China's population, according to government estimates.

The ban on logging in Sichuan, effective Sept. 1, was ordered for the Chuanki Forest Area, 4.63 million hectares spanning 54 counties, the state-run Xinhua News Agency reported.

Because of heavy logging, the area in western Sichuan where soil erosion is a problem has nearly doubled from 60,000 square kilometres in the 1950s to 110,000 square kilometres, the report said.

The Songhua River at Harbin, in northeast China's Heilongjiang province, remained at record levels Sunday, state media said.

The army sent reinforcements to Harbin over the

weekend to strengthen the 24-kilometre levee protecting the centre of the city from the Songhua.

But the government allowed villages on the opposite shore to be engulfed by a brown sea of river water to divert the flow away from Harbin. Throughout flooded regions, farms have been allowed to be inundated to protect cities.

At Daqing, about 160 kilometres northwest of Harbin, soldiers repaired a breach in the third and last line of levees protecting the Daqing oil field and city from the Nen River.

Flooded regions were short of medicines, and stomach illnesses, dysentery, hepatitis and diseases carried by waterborne parasites were on the rise, Health Minister Zhang Wenkang warned.

He said the problem could get worse in the next three months, a period that usually is the peak for the spread of epidemics in China.

Rebels say Angolan troops enter Congo's civil war

KINSHASA, Congo (AP) — With tanks and air support, Angolan forces backing the government drove into the western Congolese town of Kitona Sunday and captured a key rebel base there, a ministry-level official said.

Rebels acknowledged losing the town, but said they were continuing their advance on the capital, Kinshasa, and had also captured the important eastern city of Kisangani.

The Congolese official, who is in close contact with Kabila and spoke on condition of anonymity, said Angola staged the attacks to cut rebels off from their supply routes down a narrow corridor from the Atlantic coast to Kinshasa.

"The Angolans are at the base and have captured a large cache of weapons and ammunition," the official said, adding that Angola had also sent a number of warplanes to Kinshasa's international airport.

Bizima Karaha, a rebel leader, acknowledged the fall of Kitona.

"We've made a tactical

withdrawal," Karaha said, adding: "Kitona is Congo. It will remain Congo. Angola cannot colonise Congo."

The fall of Kitona, just a few kilometres inland from the Atlantic coast, traps rebel forces between their main supply bases in the west and the capital, which is still controlled by the government. The rebels have been using Kitona to receive troops airlifted across the country from the main rebel bases in eastern Congo.

But Karaha said rebel troops were continuing their march towards Kinshasa and Sunday had also captured Kisangani, Congo's third-largest city.

The capture of Kisangani could not be independently confirmed.

Congo's Information Minister Didier Mumengi, speaking to The Associated Press in Kinshasa, confirmed the deployment of Angolan troops.

"They are deploying beside our Congolese forces to reinforce and protect our army," Mumengi said.

Asked earlier Sunday about rebel claims of an Angolan drive towards Kitona, Mumengi called it a defensive action.

But Karaha warned that Angolan involvement would complicate the crisis and said the rebels would retaliate.

Zimbabwe deployed troops Friday to help Kabila ward off rebel advances on Kinshasa.

The insurgents, who accuse Kabila of power-grabbing, tribalism and mismanagement of this vast central African nation, have pushed to within 30 kilometres of Kinshasa.

In announcing that Angolan troops had crossed into Congo, Karaha urged the Luanda government to "come to its senses" and withdraw its forces.

Angola's entry into Congo's civil war came as South Africa tried to salvage a crumbling regional peace summit in Pretoria.

Two key leaders snubbed the talks — Kabila and Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe, who is supporting the Kinshasa government with troops and

military equipment.

With the intervention of Angolan forces, chances of a negotiated settlement are "almost impossible," Karaha said.

Saturday, Karaha said rebels had shot down two Zimbabwean warplanes allied with Kabila's forces. The report could not be independently confirmed.

In the Zimbabwean capital, Harare, Mugabe's spokesman rejected the rebel claims.

There was no immediate comment from Kinshasa on the allegations.

Karaha said the attacks Saturday demonstrated the rebels' resolve to continue fighting as long as outside forces were involved.

"It should be understood that the people of Congo are ready to resist any foreign aggression," he said of the reported arrival of more than 600 troop reinforcements from Zimbabwe and a contingent from Angola in support of Kabila.

The rebels themselves are said to have the backing of neighbouring Rwanda and Uganda.

Indonesian students demand Suharto trial

SURABAYA, Indonesia (R) — About 2,000 students demonstrated in Indonesia's second largest city Surabaya Sunday, demanding that former President Suharto be brought to trial for the country's economic crisis.

Suharto stepped down on May 21 after bloody riots and a wave of anti-government demonstrations. Indonesia is in the midst of its worst economic crisis in 30 years, with the rupiah currency having lost about 80 per cent of its value against the dollar.

About half of the country's population of 200 million are expected to fall below the poverty line as

the crisis destroys millions of jobs.

"The situation in Indonesia is getting worse. We don't have any rice, oil or sugar," said Sutrisno, a student activist of the Surabaya Teaching Institute which organised the protest.

The demonstration is the first large-scale student protest in Surabaya since the ousting of Suharto.

The students said the former president was responsible for the country's current economic crisis and had to account for his failures.

Waving banners, the students yelled "Hang Suharto, Hang Prabowo". Lieutenant-General

Prabowo Subianto is the son-in-law of Suharto.

The students also called for Suharto and Prabowo to be held responsible for the kidnappings of student activists which took place from the end of last year up to the end of May.

Prabowo is currently being investigated by a special military board for his alleged involvement in the kidnappings of student and political activists. The military board is expected to announce its findings Monday.

Students said another demonstration would be held Monday by the students of Airlangga University.

Low turnout for Princess Diana walk in London

LONDON (R) — A charity walk following Princess Diana's funeral route through London failed to attract much interest Sunday and so few people turned up that the organisers said they might make a loss.

The BBC said 15,000 people were expected to sign up for the 10-km walk, organised by the North London Walking Club, but only about 2,000 registered.

As rain poured down on the British capital, Sky Television said 200 people at most turned up for the morning walk, due to begin and end in Hyde Park, near Diana's Kensington Palace home.

The club put the turnout at "several hundred".

The five pounds (\$8) entry fee for the walk will be divided among the Diana Memorial Fund and two other charities.

Almost a year after Diana's death in a car crash in Paris, there are signs of a backlash to the wave of emotion sparked off by the tragedy.

Sunday, a former Archbishop of Canterbury labelled Diana a "false goddess" with "loose sexual morals," according to the Sunday Times newspaper.

Lord Coggan, who was the head of the Anglican Church from 1974 to 1980, said the nationwide grieving and admiration for Diana had turned Britain into a goddess nation.

"Along came this false goddess and filled the gap for a time," said Coggan. "The British people identified with someone who had pretty loose morals and certainly loose sexual morals."

His words echoed those of Sunday school teachers who sparked a row last week after they told children the Princess of Wales went to hell because of the immoral and unchristian lifestyle she led.

An independent film produced for the BBC, which recorded people's unguarded reactions in four cities on the eve and the day of Diana's funeral, showed that not all Britons were swept up by the mass mourning even at the time.

The film, to be broadcast on Sept. 6, the anniversary of Diana's funeral in Westminster Abbey, caught some people lining the funeral route arguing. Others professed indifference.

"A lot of the public may be fed up with the maudlin hagiographies about Diana. The nation was not united in grief," the documentary's director, Colin Luke, said.

Millions are still hooked on "The People's Princess" and interest is again likely to reach fever pitch as the anniversary of her death approaches.

'Omagh not the end of bombing'

LONDON (AFP) — Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern warned Sunday that the Omagh bombing that claimed 28 lives would probably not be Northern Ireland's last atrocity because a small element still refused to accept the Ulster peace accord.

"I'd love to say to you that I believe this is the last event but I think there is a small element, and they are small, who do not share that feeling," he said on BBC television.

"They believe that they have some kind of a mandate from some period in history that gives them some right to do this," the premier of the Irish Republic in the south of the island said. "They have still said they are

against the Good Friday agreement and will continue to pursue their actions."

The April peace accord provides for unprecedented power-sharing between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland.

Internment for terrorists had previously been on the agenda for his government, Ahern said, warning: "I think it would still be, if we had to."

Archbishop Rohin Eames, Anglican Primate of Ireland, said Omagh was a watershed.

Eames told BBC television: "I have a feeling in me, it's a sort of gut reaction, that the magnitude of this particular atrocity, the fact that so many young people, so many little children, were affected has cut

right through this society in a way which perhaps other atrocities — dreadful though they were and affecting human lives though they did — may not have had the same effect."

Archbishop Sean Brady, the Irish Roman Catholic Primate, said: "I hope and I think it is different this time."

"But it will only be different if people who are prepared to use violence change their mind, or if the support on which they rely is taken away from them."

Ahern said at a memorial rally at Omagh Saturday for the victims of the atrocity he was now looking for the self-styled Real IRA which carried out the

Omagh bombing to make permanent its suspension of violence.

"It must be put beyond doubt that so far as nationalist and republican traditions are concerned, violence is over and done with, never again to be engaged in or acquiesced with," he said.

Earlier this week the Real IRA said it was suspending its operations while it entered a "period of consultation" on its future direction.

The "Real IRA" is a splinter group of the Irish Republican Army, whose truce more than a year ago cleared the way for its political wing, Sinn Fein, to enter the talks which ended in agreement in April.

Indonesia mass graves said proof of abuse

LHOKSEUMAWA (R) — The human rights team probing army atrocities in Indonesia's Aceh province prepared to return to Jakarta Sunday after unearthing skeletal remains in mass graves they said were evidence of abuse.

"We will try to dig again today, but we already have proof," said Bahurudin Lopa, secretary general of Indonesia's official National Commission on Human Rights and leader of the investigation.

He told reporters that Saturday's grisly discovery "proves Aceh has been a killing field".

Lopa's team has been digging at several suspected mass grave sites, but he said fresh excavations could be called off because of heavy rain.

Lopa said any digging Sunday would be at new sites, and he did not plan a return to where the bones of at least 12 people were unearthed Saturday, despite the suspicion that up to 150 other bodies could have been dumped there.

Scores of human bones were dug up at a remote patch of wasteland in the far western province of Sumatra Island, where locals say a nine-year military campaign involving torture, rape and killings has been waged against a separatist insurgency.

Lahowers hacking at the ground with shovels, knives and sharpened sticks uncovered five

skulls and scores of human bones, apparent evidence of alleged army atrocities.

Lopa's team has heard testimony from Acehese women who said their husbands and sons were abducted by the army as late as May this year.

Villagers demanded an official investigation into the widespread disappearances they say started after former President Suharto ordered a crackdown on separatist rebels in the staunchly Muslim province in 1989.

The chilling testimony heard by Lopa's investigators included tales of torture in the village of Bili Aron.

Investigators uncovered the broken bones of at least two people in the grounds of a former army house in the village.

Witnesses said it had been used as a detention camp.

Commission officials said the bone fragments belonged to at least two people. Villagers had indicated many bodies had been buried there but had been moved a few days before the army left the house last Wednesday.

After the investigators left Saturday, villagers burned the house to the ground.

Evidence of army atrocities have elicited unprecedented apologies from President B.J. Habibie and armed forces chief General Wiranto in the past month.

Locals welcomed the local government's agreement to pay for the support of victims of army abuses in Aceh and to release all political prisoners as soon as possible.

Villagers say they do not want to break away from Indonesia but want those responsible for the torture and killings brought to justice.

The military has been on the defensive since Suharto resigned on May 21 after bloody riots sparked by the nation's devastating economic crisis.

It has been huffed by charges of abuse against insurgents in Aceh, the former Portuguese colony of East Timor and the remote eastern province of Irian Jaya, and by admissions that elite troops were involved in the abduction and torture of anti-Suharto activists.

Wiranto flew to Aceh in early August to apologise for army abuses there and to announce the end of military operations in the province. He said all combat troops would be withdrawn within a month.

The first 250 troops left Lhokseumawe last Thursday in a convoy of trucks to cheers and cat-calls from locals.

Another 729 soldiers are to be withdrawn on Aug. 31, which Indonesia says will complete the removal of combat troops.

Helicopters ferry more bodies from Himalayan village

NEW DELHI, India (AP) — Taking advantage of a brief clearing in the weather Sunday, air force helicopters flew to the site of a massive landslide in the Himalayas to transport the bodies of nine victims buried under a mountain of mud and boulders, local news agencies reported.

Paramilitary soldiers pulled out 10 more bodies of victims from the slush in the mountain village of Malpa, where 202 people were already feared killed.

Saturday, a series of landslides send rocks and mud cascading down the mountain, which has been lashed by heavy monsoon rains for three weeks. The total num-

ber of dead so far has touched 239.

Sunday, air force helicopters made five trips to the Malpa region. Press Trust of India news agency quoted local army commander Maj. Gen. J.R. Mukherjee as saying.

So far, security forces have transported 17 of the 45 bodies of victims to nearby towns. Also, air force helicopters have rescued 18 survivors from Malpa, 300 kilometres east of New Delhi, PTI said.

The survivors, most of them injured by falling rocks and mud, are being treated by doctors attached to paramilitary forces in the village.

Among those feared killed were 60 Hindu pilgrims beaded for a pilgrimage to a sacred lake across the Chinese border in Tibet.

Protima Gauri Bedi, a famous classical Indian dancer was among the pilgrims. Her body was found in the area and was banded over to her relatives Sunday, United News of India news agency reported.

Others missing were porters and local villagers who were swept away.

The army was trying to send paratroopers to Malpa from a different direction to step up rescue work along the Kali River, PTI said.

More than 30,000 people

have been evacuated to higher ground from 30 towns and villages facing a flood threat after a blockage in the Mandakini River in nearby Garhwal region.

Army and civil engineers have decided not to dynamite the rocks and boulders that have fallen into the river, causing a huge lake to form in the area. Engineers fear that removing the blockage will release huge quantities of water downstream very quickly and push up by as much as 8 metres downstream. That could engulf 30 town and villages, about 100 kilometres downstream.

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Chance for reform

IF WE are to judge our democratic experiment by the events of the past few weeks, then we have all the reasons to be proud of our leadership and our achievements and be confident that we are on the right path. Despite the news of His Majesty the King's hospitalisation, the revelation that our economy is not in the best of health and the agony of a very hot summer season with little water, Jordanians at all levels have shown a great deal of responsibility and have faced all the bad news with patience, calmness, broadmindedness, and above all, solidarity.

While we can only pray to God to bring the King back home in good health, we think that we are able through dialogue and the exchange of ideas to surmount any crisis, whether economic or otherwise. That the outgoing government was unfortunate in its handling of our affairs is now a foregone conclusion. Now we are blessed with a new government with a clear mandate that is topped by a pledge by His Majesty the King to ensure openness, transparency and dialogue.

And now we are blessed by the Regent kicking off that dialogue by meeting with parliamentarians on Saturday and the Muslim Brotherhood's leadership on Sunday.

We are also blessed by a government pledge not to press for a strict implementation of the new press law. It is our responsibility in the press, therefore, to help in initiating the dialogue and helping people from all sides of the political and non-political spectrum to air their views.

The press might want to credit itself with exposing the water crisis. Some might even claim that they contributed to government change. That might be partially true. But what is more accurate is that the newspapers have still a great way to go. And now is their chance. A chance that should not be missed.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Fahed Faneh condemned the United States missile attack on Sudan and Afghanistan and described it as inhuman and unjustified. He said the American President Bill Clinton attacked Sudan and Afghanistan in order to divert people's attention from his latest sexual fiasco with the White House trainee Monica Lewinsky. The writer slammed the United States for violating the world norms and legitimacy. He said the American administration acted on its own without referring to the Security Council because they believe only in power. While Sudan, the country allegedly supports terrorism complained to the United Nations about the American criminal act, Faneh said, Faneh said the U.S. are not authorised to strike Sudan or any other country in the world even if it proved Sudan owns chemical weapons. Faneh said Sudan is an independent country who has the right of sovereignty and integrity which should not be violated.

Al Dustour's Oreib Rantawi discussed the stalemate in the Middle East peace process. He said both sides, the Palestinians and the Israelis are playing different tactics in order to make better achievements. Rantawi said Israel is over optimistic about the future of peace talks while the Palestinians are showing over pessimism. He said both sides know the world does not take their statements very seriously, but they still insist on it because it is a part of the game. The Palestine National Authority (PNA) think by showing pessimism they will exert more pressure on the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in order to gain more in the Israel troops redeployment. The authority does not trust Netanyahu to fulfil his commitments, hence, they want to avoid further setback in the peace march. The writer said despite statements on the impasse of the peace process, the PNA and Israel are holding secret meetings on the high levels which might lead to a brake through in the peace process.

Economic Review

Changing trade rules in Jordan's favour

Dr. Yusuf Mansur

GLOBALISATION WAS never meant to be an exercise in rhetoric or a muscle-flexing performance of the intellect. It is a hard reality, a "Jumayl" where you do not always get what you wished for and sometimes you discover that what your heart had desired should have never been sought. (Just ask Dorothy and Toto.) But in the game of trade the successful player enters with tremendous value-added (high-tech, high standards, quality products) and enough clout to be able to change the rules of the game. As the infamous Harold Laski said, "When the rules of the game prove unsuitable for victory, the gentlemen of England change the rules." To be a global player, Jordan must learn both techniques.

Globalisation is a game of contracts between the haves and have-nots. Unless both parties are able to draw contracts that protect their mutual interests without one party having its welfare reduced, the contract becomes asymmetric and non-optimal. Not only should negotiators on both sides be equally competent, but also the value of their mutual contributions to the game must be approximate in order to back up their negotiations with threats and rewards. Otherwise, a wealthy yet foolish negotiator would be able to set the rules of the contract with the wildest, yet poor, player.

A small economy like that of Jordan, even with tremendous negotiating skills but little value-added, may not be able to garner optimal contracts in trade negotiations with a big trading block. Jordan has neither a big stick nor a big carrot. The solution lies in changing the rules of the game. How? By changing the players. Jordan should join with other neighbouring economies (Arab countries) to create trading blocks and negotiate new contracts.

Furthermore, the details of most trade agreements must be closely studied and evaluated if a small country, such as Jordan, is to actually gain from trade. For example, a nation that adheres to the most-favoured-nation (MFN) clause charging the same price for the product to everyone may find it difficult to attract customers from new countries through lower prices. Dumping the act of selling a product to the export market at a lower price than at home or a third market is a near surety when two nations trade with huge disparities in income, market size and industrial qualifications. While most free-trade advocates do not see any harm in dumping when it takes the form of simple price discrimination in response to market demand in the different areas of the world and thus enables a greater number of consumers to access otherwise expensive products, economists tend to frown upon predatory dumping, a phenomenon where a foreign competitor dumps the product at below-cost prices in a certain country to destroy whatever competition may exist in order to capture the whole market and then charge monopoly prices.

Jordan is experiencing many cases of predatory dumping cases that need to be immediately investigated and uprooted to avoid harm to the local industry. Acting after the damage has already taken place will be useless to the domestic economy. Not only is it difficult and costly to determine whether dumping has occurred or not but also once the damage has been done and market shares have been lost to estimate the size of the damage is a nightmare. Foreign companies would have to agree to disclose their costs, which they would never do. In the face of non-disclosure, Jordanian authorities have to hire lawyers and experts in the subject company's home country to investi-

gate and determine if the dumping had occurred. Even if dumping had occurred, proof is not the end; it is usually the beginning. The firm that has been accused of dumping would immediately approach the trade authorities in its own country and use every trick there is, such as threats of counter-measures against some Jordanian product, in order to "beat" the charge.

Another trade issue that should be immediately addressed is the disparity between protection on imports of products and the protection of inputs and intermediate goods. Jordanian industry is seldom highly vertically integrated. Many products are made with inputs that are not raw materials but are partially manufactured. Because of the various trade liberalising agreements being signed, Jordanian business people may suffer in an anomalous situation where the government reduces tariffs on the imported product while the tariffs on the intermediate good that is used by a Jordanian manufacturer to produce a product that competes with the import is retained. For obvious reasons, this reverse form of protectionism may never be challenged by the foreign competitor, but the issue should be addressed by the public and private sectors now.

Trade is a game that is played not between two products; rather it encompasses all the factors of each of the countries where the products have been made. It is a competition between systems, business environments, institutions, standards, supporting industries and people. All the components must be put into perspective before the game is started. And the winners will always be those that have the clout or the value-added to change the game at will.

Poor Benazir, poor Pakistan

By Gwynne Dyer

"IF YOU know a good screenplay writer, I'd love to meet them," said Pakistan's former prime minister Benazir Bhutto recently, pondering the swings of fortune that have all but destroyed the first family of the world's second-biggest Muslim state. But it's not clear whether the film would be a tragedy or a farce.

As a young woman, Benazir saw her father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, elected prime minister, and then banded by the military regime that overthrew him. She herself has been twice elected prime minister, and twice judicially removed. Both her brothers have died violently in mysterious circumstances. Now she and her husband face corruption charges that could put them in prison for seven years.

It is a sad final act for a family that once embodied popular hopes that Pakistan could change from a corrupt feudal state where only the soldiers and the rich have a voice into a prosperous, modern, democratic country. And as the family faces ruin, so does the country itself.

Bhutto is deeply unhappy about it. "In some ways we resemble the Soviet Union in its final years, where a military superpower, with all its airplanes and missiles and 'bombs', was collapsing because it could not sustain that empire," she said two weeks ago. "Our economy and our social basis can no longer sustain our desire to have an ambitious agenda."

But the analogy with the Soviet Union goes further than that, for like Pakistan, it was made up of different provinces ('republics') speaking different languages. When the money finally ran out, it broke up into its component parts — and in Pakistan, the money has definitely run out.

Only three months after Pakistanis rejoiced as Islamabad answered India's five nuclear tests with six of their own, the Pakistani rupee has fallen 15 per cent against the dollar. There are fears that the country will soon default on its \$30 billion foreign debt: \$600 million is due to be repaid in September, and Pakistan has only \$500 million left in its foreign reserves. Its credit rating has been downgraded to 'B3', making it (with Indonesia) the lowest-rated country in the world.

"The feeling is that this is a moment of silence before the execution," said a stockbroker in Karachi, the country's

biggest city. "Unless a fairy godmother turns up, we simply do not have the money to pay our debts."

Although the fairy godmother has turned up repeatedly in the past — in the form of loans from the International Monetary Fund or injections of cash by oil-rich Gulf states — it looks like this time she isn't coming. The steep fall in oil prices has left the Gulf with no money to spare, and the IMF is barred from handing over any more money to Pakistan because of the U.S. sanctions imposed after the country's May nuclear tests.

Indeed, it's hard to resist the speculation that one of

There is a popular theory that the rich make more honest politicians because they don't need to steal, but it rarely works in practice because rich people have trouble grasping the concept of 'enough.'

India's secret motives for conducting its nuclear tests, knowing that Pakistan's government would face irresistible political pressure to reply in kind, was precisely to drive Pakistan into bankruptcy. Both nations would obviously face economic sanctions afterwards, but India's economy, richer and far bigger, could ride them out, whereas deeply indebted Pakistan's could not.

If Pakistan's economy does crash, it will have less impact on the global economy than Indonesia's collapse last year, for Pakistan is a far poorer country. But the political turmoil that follows may be hair-raising stuff, for this is a country with a few dozen highly vulnerable nuclear weapons — and almost daily fighting along its disputed border with India in Kashmir.

Even at the best of times Pakistan has highly unstable politics: three elected governments have been removed for corruption and financial incompetence in the past 10 years. In this political atmosphere, little attention gets paid to

development — so only 34 per cent of Pakistan's 140 million people can read and write, and fewer than half even have electricity.

Politics in Pakistan is chronically unstable because the politicians are mostly drawn from the wealthy feudal families. They have little by way of political principles and programmes; their main agenda is safeguarding their wealth, and even adding to it while they are in power. So politics is monumentally corrupt, and only about one per cent of the population pays taxes.

A disheartening example of this is Benazir Bhutto herself, once seen as the woman who could break that cycle. The Bhutto family's feudal estates in Sindh are so large that she doesn't even know how many peasants work on them — yet she paid only 14,000 rupees (about \$350) in income tax last year. She also failed to declare any foreign assets, though it now appears that she and her husband have up to 36 bank accounts in Switzerland, Britain, France and the United States.

There is a popular theory that the rich make more honest politicians because they don't need to steal, but it rarely works in practice because rich people have trouble grasping the concept of 'enough.' Benazir Bhutto and her husband Asif Ali Zardari (who was known as 'Mr. Ten Per Cent' when he was investment minister in her government), claim that all the charges of corruption against them are politically motivated, but the evidence is piling up.

The Swiss authorities, who had already frozen \$13.8 million in the couple's secret bank accounts there and asked Pakistan to bring money-laundering charges against Benazir's husband, formally asked Islamabad to bring the same charges against Benazir herself on Aug. 19. Estimates of the amount by which her wealth grew during her time in office range from \$300 million to \$1 billion.

For over 30 years the fate of the Bhutto family and the Pakistani state have been intimately intertwined. Now the family is going under, undone by its own corruption — and the state will be lucky if it does not meet the same fate for the same reason.

The writer is a London-based journalist and historian. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

A chance to reset America's moral course

By Stephen L. Carter

NEW HAVEN, Connecticut — So what should Bill Clinton do? Everyone now knows that he had an intimate relationship with a 21-year-old White House intern and spent seven months lying about it — to the public, to his family and to investigators. His presidency is so hobbled that when United States armed forces attacked alleged terrorist targets in Afghanistan and the Sudan on Thursday, many Americans wondered whether the president just wanted to distract the public from the scandal.

Commentators, not all of them on the right, are talking of impeachment or resignation. Yet throwing in the towel or toughing it out are not the president's only choices. It may be that the Monica Lewinsky scandal presents Clinton with two much-needed opportunities: the opportunity to finally change his own life and the opportunity to help the nation regain its moral bearings.

In the current uneasy moment there is a chance for genuine moral rejuvenation, which the nation desperately needs. And President Clinton can help lead that process, although he will first have to convince the public of his determination to turn over a new leaf. True repentance begins with a forthright and non-accusatory admission of wrongdoing. The president and his defenders continue to argue that his relationship with Lewinsky is a private matter. But this notion is morally sloppy.

Although the people most harmed by President Clinton's conduct are surely his wife, his daughter and (lest we forget) Lewinsky herself, adultery is private only in the limited sense that it should not be against the law. It is wrong for prosecutors, even special prosecutors, to spend public resources trying to ferret it out. But once adultery becomes publicly known — by whatever means, fair or foul — it is too late to raise the privacy argument.

Adultery rips at the fundamental fabric of marriage itself and thus is ultimately a public wrong. This does not mean that adultery is unforgivable — any more than lying itself is unforgivable. But when the president's defenders announce that the American people are prepared to forgive him, they are stating only a possible truth, not a settled fact. The question is whether President Clinton is prepared in his heart to be forgiven. The president, as an evangelical Christian, surely understands that the premise of forgiveness is true repentance. Apology and acceptance of responsibility (the two mat-

ters that have obsessed the news media in recent days) are only a part of what is required. True repentance is not a public relations strategy. True repentance requires a determination to turn and walk the path of good. What would count as evidence of true repentance? For one thing, Mr. Clinton must abandon his habit of resorting to legalism and obfuscation. Far better, if Mr. Clinton wishes to set a moral example, would be a magnanimous confession of this weakness and an explicit promise to do right. Second, the president owes concrete apologies, not only to his family, but to the many surrogates he sent forth to defend him, to Ms. Lewinsky and to the American people as well. Third, Mr. Clinton and his supporters must put an end to the lashing out, as though others are to blame for this humiliation.

This may seem a hard standard, especially when so many other characters in this drama have also behaved in ways that are immoral. Linda Tripp, for example, pretended to be a friend who would keep Lewinsky's confidences, but she was not. In short, she lied. And Kenneth Starr himself might have behaved in a more honourable fashion had he not let his zealous pursuit of President Clinton outstrip his sense of decency. I suspect that most prosecutors, faced with evidence that a married man lied under oath to cover up an affair, would respond: "Call the National Enquirer. This is not the kind of work I do." Indeed we, the people of the United States, have not acquitted ourselves admirably in the contretemps. If the polls are correct, we do not really care very much whether the president lies to us as long as we are otherwise happy with his performance. This alarming display of cynicism teaches our children that what matters most is not right or wrong but simply getting what we want.

President Clinton, in his handling of the current scandal, has tended to reinforce rather than challenge this dangerous cultural trend. This does not mean that Clinton should resign, despite the steady drumbeat to that effect by many politicians and editorial writers. Unless Starr's report contains convincing evidence of other serious misconduct, Clinton may be able to serve out his term with dignity. But he must exercise genuine moral leadership. His address to the nation last Monday night, conveying only the merest hint of contrition, did not come close.

True, most of our presidents have been morally tarnished in one way or another, and many have committed

adultery or lied to the nation or both. But Bill Clinton is the president under today's rules, when what was once left unreported is now fair game. And it is his own recklessness, not an unfair standard, that has produced the current crisis.

It may be, as many pundits have complained, that we have lost our national capacity for moral outrage — at least as long as the economy is humming along. Even if the current scandal had never arisen, our moral sense has been corroded by the steady drip-drip-drip of everyday lying and cheating.

Still, the president's predicament might be a godsend. It may be heaven-sent for Clinton himself because sometimes getting caught is the only way to learn the lesson. He will never have a better opportunity to seek the spiritual solace of true repentance. It may also be heaven-sent for the rest of us because sometimes it takes a rude shock to wake the national conscience, which is in our post-modern era, not defeated but exhausted. That conscience needs awakening because our sense of right and wrong is ultimately what makes America a special place. This depressing scandal might represent our best chance at reinvestigating our shared belief in an American moral code — the clear understanding of right and wrong that sparked the civil rights movement and won the cold war. A moral code for which we are prepared to sacrifice our own short-term interests, in exchange for the nation's long-term good. A moral code, in short, that matters.

In its place we have set an ethic of selfishness, in which sacrifice is a dirty word, in which successful leadership is measured only by the rise of the Standard & Poor's 500 and in which the only use of words like right and wrong is for political gain. We have the chance, finally, to turn our national misfortune to national advantage, to restore the proper balance to our politics — so that the quest for electoral advantage or for a place in history is guided by our moral sense, and not the other way around. The challenge for President Clinton is whether he possesses the moral courage to lead us there.

The writer is a law professor at Yale University, and is the author, most recently, of "Civility: Manners, Morals, and the Etiquette of Democracy."

— The New York Times

Carcas as 'ma'

The British government is continuing its campaign to reassure the public and foreign consumers that there is no risk from "mad cow" disease. It also has to cope with the problem of disposing of a mountain of carcasses.

By Dan Palmer

LONDON — A great deal of cattle and sheep meat are the products of the British government's attempt to deal with the "mad cow" disease. It is under control. Every week, 1,500 tonnes of carcasses are added to the mountain of meat. The carcasses are then sent to a rendering plant, where they are turned into animal feed and other products. The carcasses are then sent to a rendering plant, where they are turned into animal feed and other products.

The carcasses are then sent to a rendering plant, where they are turned into animal feed and other products. The carcasses are then sent to a rendering plant, where they are turned into animal feed and other products. The carcasses are then sent to a rendering plant, where they are turned into animal feed and other products.

Some scientists believe that the feed may have caused BSE (Bovine Spongiform Encephalitis), commonly known as "mad cow" disease. The carcasses are then sent to a rendering plant, where they are turned into animal feed and other products. The carcasses are then sent to a rendering plant, where they are turned into animal feed and other products.

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— The New York

Features

'Biological warfare' allegation as screw worm spreads

By Felicity Arbuthnot

LONDON — An outbreak of the potentially lethal screw worm pest has reached epidemic proportions in Iraq and threatens the entire Middle East region, according to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

Its emergence in Iraq, where it has never previously been seen, has produced accusations of United States-backed biological warfare.

Recalling U.S. participation in the elimination of infestations in the Americas through the release of millions of sterilised male screw worm flies, the Baghdad Observer newspaper commented: "The U.S. government's involvement in the sterilisation facilities also cover for producing the screw worm fly in biological warfare."

It pointed out that plants involved in screw worm control could produce up to five million flies a week and that every sterilised fly had unsterilised parents: "That these Latin American parasites are now to be found in Iraq should provoke a few questions about the probability of biological warfare."

To answer the question of how the flies came to Iraq, the newspaper added, one does not have to look too far: the same way the sterilised insects are delivered — in boxes on a small plane.

The only flights in and out of Iraq since the imposition of a U.N. embargo are those carrying U.N. personnel, including members of an international team of weapons inspectors. Some Iraqi scientists point an accusing finger at these flights.

Scepticism is required over all claims by and against Iraq, with both Baghdad and its opponents engaged in a bitter propaganda war.

But the allegation deserves scrutiny, George Pumphrey, a senior researcher for the German Parliament who has extensive knowledge of biological warfare, claims that "Iraq is but the latest victim of what appears to be a deliberate introduction of the screw worm as a biological weapon."

Infestation is caused by the larvae of the screw worm fly, which can live in the wounds and orifices of warm-blooded animals.

Within 12 hours of a fly laying several hundred eggs on the edge of a wound, the larvae hatch and enter the body for

feeding. They can kill a cow in less than seven days.

Infested wounds often give off a dark, foul-smelling discharge.

Although animals such as cows and goats are most often affected, but humans can be attacked, too. Iraqi officials say 40 people have died in the outbreak.

The adult fly can travel up to 300 kilometres in its lifetime.

The epidemic began in September 1996 and by last December 12 of Iraq's 16 provinces were affected. More than 46,800 cases were reported during 1997. "This constitutes an explosion," says FAO economist Henning Steinfeld. He says that Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Syria are seriously threatened, and that there is also danger for Bahrain, Lebanon, Qatar, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates.

The losses come on top of an already serious livestock situation. A shortage of imported feed has reduced poultry production to five per cent of its pre-Gulf war output. Dairy production is down by two-thirds. Until now, the traditional cattle sector, which includes buffalo, has fared better, but in a country where the U.N. Children's Fund says one-third of children suffer growth or impaired intelligence due to malnutrition, further decimation of livestock could herald disaster.

Daniel Robicheau, co-editor of the book, *Hidden Casualties: The Environmental, Health and Political Consequences of the Persian Gulf War*, says the sort of response generated in Libya — where an international campaign eliminated the screw worm — is required in Iraq. "Without such an international response," he counsels, "Iraqi health authorities see the screw worm fly infestation becoming endemic or pandemic, threatening to destroy animal husbandry and causing grievous consequences to human life as well."

He claims that FAO has done little to combat the menace, and that only a small amount of the relevant pesticide has been delivered.

The writer is a freelance journalist based in London who specialises in coverage in Iraq, which she visits frequently.

Carcass mountain grows as 'mad cow' cull continues

By Dan Palmer

LONDON — A growing lake of cattle-fat and a rising mountain of condemned meat are the by-products of the British government's attempt to prove that the "mad cow" epidemic is under control.

Every week, 1,500 tonnes of tallow are added to the three tanks which already contain 176,000 tonnes of fat, and 2,000 tonnes of ground meat and bone meal (MBM) are heaped on to the 331,000 tonnes awaiting disposal.

The leftovers are the results of the Over Thirty Month Scheme (OTMS) brought in by the British government in 1996 in an attempt to restore confidence in British beef exports.

About 2.4 million cattle have been slaughtered under the scheme, which follows the imposition of a ban on the use of cattle-feed containing sheep brains.

Some scientists believe use of the feed may have caused BSE (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy commonly known as "mad cow" disease). There have been 170,000 recorded cases in Britain since it was identified in 1986. It is associated with Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD) in humans, which attacks the brain.

Three people died of CJD in 1995, five in 1996 and 10 in 1997, according to Britain's Department of Health. Numbers may be far greater because it has an incubation period of up to 10 years.

Farmers receive compensation for slaughtering cattle, or their offspring, which might have eaten the feed.

The government hopes this voluntary cull among the nation's 11.6 million cattle will convince the European Union to lift its ban on British beef exports.

Cattle confirmed as infected with BSE are incinerated immediately. But there is no agreement on how best to dispose of the tens of thousands of other slaughtered animals.

"We haven't figured out what is the best way to dispose of (the carcasses)," says Ayesha Hazarika, a spokesperson for the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

The search is on for contractors to burn OTMS cattle carcasses directly, rather than grinding them up first and producing more tallow and MBM for storage.

Plans to burn 4,000 carcasses a week have been postponed because the ministry has not found a company willing to do the job cheaply enough.

In the meantime, some stored tallow and MBM has been burned by a company contracted to destroy 15,000 tonnes of MBM a year for three years.

The burning of tallow to generate energy is under consideration, but nothing concrete has been decided.

"There's quite clearly going to be the need for new storage facilities," says Gordon Munro, a spokesperson for the Ministry's Intervention Board Executive Agency.

Incineration is opposed by Vegetarians International Voice for Animals (VIVA), which says that there is a risk that the ash and fumes will spread BSE.

VIVA also claims that tens of thousands of BSE cattle are buried in farmers' fields throughout

Britain, risking soil contamination.

Tony Wardell, a journalist who works with VIVA, says farmers are burying carcasses to maintain their reputation as reliable beef exporters.

He also argues that some farmers have made money out of the BSE crisis. For example, farmer A, knowing he has unsellable BSE-infected cattle, gives them to farmer B. Farmer A thus maintains his reputation as having a BSE herd free from infection, while farmer B receives about £80 government compensation for each cow.

"I couldn't really comment on that. I hope it doesn't happen," says National Farmers Union spokesperson Chris Peeler. But he adds, "I wouldn't say something like that is impossible."

The Farmers Union points out that it would be difficult for farmers to get away with such a subterfuge because of the use of cattle ear-tags for identification.

Dr. Stephen Dealler, a medical doctor who has followed the BSE crisis, insists that despite all the measures taken there is still a risk of humans getting CJD because of the possibility that the agents that cause BSE will contaminate the soil and air and find their way back into the food chain.

"We don't know enough about it (BSE)," he says.

Dr. Dealler claims that the average Briton might have eaten 50 BSE-infected meals before the OTMS measure were put in place.

The writer is a Canadian journalist working with Gemini News Service in London on a fellowship arrangement with the School of Journalism and Communications at the University of Regina.

— Gemini News

U.S. expats bunker down in Pakistan

By Jason Burke

IN THE British Club in Islamabad, they traditionally discuss servants; in the American Club the subject, according to the conventional wisdom, is security.

The broad tree-lined avenues of the Pakistani capital's diplomatic enclave are remarkable only for their air of calm. Here, in a country full of noise and bustle, are the embassies, high commissions, consulates, compounds, and clubs of the expatriate community. Most blend into the background, but with its razor wire, arc lights, moat and endless visa queue, the American embassy is about as inconspicuous as the Statue of Liberty.

This weekend, following the double bombing in East Africa nine days ago, many of the 1,000 U.S. nationals living in Pakistan were still facing up to the realisation that it could very easily have been them. Nineteen years ago it almost was — in November 1979, a mob marched through Islamabad, incensed by a rumour, possibly spread by the Soviets, that American soldiers had desecrated the Holy Muslim sites of Mecca and Medina. Armed police had forced them away from the American cul-

tural centre, but the embassy's defences were not strong enough to repel them. It was hurried to the ground and four people, two of them Americans, were killed.

"People talk about it all the time," said Stacey Gilbert, an American who works for the United Nations Development Programme and lives in Islamabad. "When people say we are all paranoid about security, you can't help but say, 'Well, your embassy hasn't been torched.'"

The State Department has issued "advisories" to Americans in several Islamic countries to be on their guard, yet security measures in Pakistan have not been stepped up significantly following the attacks in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam. The embassy has merely warned all American nationals in the country to be extra vigilant, but some take their own, possibly rather extreme, measures.

"There are people who never leave the embassy compound. They never eat anywhere other than the restaurant there, and buy all their

food from the commissary. They even spend all their spare time at the American Club," said Gilbert, who has been in Pakistan for three months.

While senior diplomats refer to a "complex" relationship between Pakistan and the U.S., others talk about a powerful undercurrent of anti-Americanism in the strongly Islamic country.

"Let's face it," said one American businessman last week, "no other nation walks around with a target painted on its back." Osama Ben Laden, the Saudi millionaire suspected of involvement in the East African bomb attacks, lives in neighbouring Afghanistan, and, with a multitude of Islamic groups of varying militancy training in the mountains that straddle the border between the two countries, there are many directions from which an attack might come.

In March, rumours that an Islamic group was planning an attack forced increased security measures. According to one Pakistani intelligence officer, the group then switched its attention elsewhere, possibly to Africa. Two weeks ago, a middle-aged American was shot dead, and his wife injured, while on a trekking trip in the Pakistani

Himalayas.

At first, the attack was dismissed as a robbery that went wrong, but it is now being described by police as politically motivated. And last year, four Americans and their Pakistani driver were shot dead in the violent city of Karachi. That attack was linked to the conviction in the U.S. of Aimal Khansi, a Pakistani national who murdered two CIA employees.

Ironically, the most conspicuous of all the Americans in Pakistan are the Marines, sent to guard the community. Their shaven heads, gym-bulged torsos and ever-present radios are often seen at expat parties. Their opinion of the Islamic world is harsh. "Man, this whole region is a shithole. They're all out to get us and we're pretty much out to get them," said one young Marine who did not want to be named.

But Richard Hogland, press spokesman for the embassy, said that he lived away from the compound and enjoyed it. "Diplomats live protected lives," he said. "There's no point making the cocoon even tighter. Of course we are concerned about security, but you have to get on with your life."

— The Independent

Japanese-American author sparks controversy over racism

By Sarah Jackson-Han

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Lois-Anne Yamanaka is ill at ease with her new image as a troublemaker. But the 36-year-old Japanese-American author is that and more to Asian-American scholars who view her work as racist.

The Hawaiian-born writer "is a bit bewildered," said an associate, by the controversy over her novel "Blind Hanging," a poignant tale about three Japanese-American children coping with their mother's death.

Yamanaka herself goes further in describing how the outcry over a minor character in the book, a Filipino child molester, has affected her.

"This has been very difficult," she said, speaking slowly and deliberately in an interview from her home in Hawaii. "I acknowledge people's hurt," she said, adding: "Our community is so complicated."

The furor over "Blind Hanging" erupted this summer at a conference of the Association for Asian American Studies (AAS), a relatively new field comprising many accomplished academics from numerous disciplines.

The association awarded Yamanaka its literary prize, then rescinded

it amid protest from scholars who were deeply offended by her inclusion of the Filipino rapist.

The fracas prompted the entire AAS board to resign. About a dozen former presidents are now weighing how to revive the group and get a new slate of officers seated, said Franklin Odo, AAS president from 1989-91.

It has also sparked an outcry from writers — including noted authors Amy Tan and Maxine Hong Kingston — who view withdrawal of the award as censorship, and highlighted the extraordinary diversity of Asian America.

"This goes to the heart of questions about Asian-American studies," said Jeff Yang, founder and publisher of "A. Magazine," a lively, glossy magazine aimed at young Asian-American adults.

Many of the 10 million Americans of Asian ancestry regard "Asian-American" as a term of convenience, roping together dozens of subgroups that are often divided by centuries-old animosities, he said.

"But we've gone to a state of critical mass," Yang said, "where we can be divided among ourselves and have our issues reach headline proportion."

The Filipino character in

Yamanaka's book "resurrects and perpetuates the stereotype of the Filipino as a sexual predator," said Linda Revilla, a University of Hawaii lecturer and Filipino-American studies scholar.

The furor over "Blind Hanging" reflects the longtime marginalisation of Filipinos in Hawaii, she said, noting that Filipino- and Polynesian-Americans are frequently targets of cruel ethnic humour there.

Hawaii's image as a multiethnic melting pot where interracial marriages are commonplace and multiracial children the norm masks a range of bitter ethnic animosities and sharp class distinctions, experts say.

And while Hawaiians of East Asian descent are largely at the top of the socioeconomic ladder, those with roots in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands largely make up the bottom.

"The irony is that Hawaii hills itself as a racial paradise," Revilla said.

That point isn't lost on the author, who spent 10 years teaching "at-risk" Filipino students at a Honolulu school plagued by gang violence.

"I hadn't anticipated this kind of reaction for a minor character," said

Yamanaka, who lives in Hawaii with her native Hawaiian husband and their seven-year-old son. "It's almost as though people are hurt about historical wrongs and it's coming to the surface because of the book."

"If the book has opened up that kind of conversation, maybe that's a good thing," she said. "This has been very time-consuming and hurtful."

"If I were a young writer and saw this happen I would be scared. The distinction between author and narrator became invisible," she said. "Suddenly I was being called a racist and a pervert. I found those responses very alarming."

Now at work on a new book — her first, a collection of poems, won the 1993 Pushcart Prize — Yamanaka said it's harder now to sit down alone and write: To get critics and censors, as she puts it, out of her head.

But those who prevailed in getting Yamanaka's prize revoked deny that their aim is censorship and insist that the real question is whether to sanction such a work with the AAS imprimatur.

"I will still read her and encourage others to read her, but this organisation shouldn't give her an award," said Revilla.

Grameen, Monsanto sowing seeds to ruin?

By Abid Aslam

WASHINGTON — An unusual alliance between a renowned village bank and an aggressive biotechnology corporation with ambitions in Third World markets is raising fears for the livelihood of peasant farmers in Bangladesh.

Under the deal, involving Bangladesh's Grameen Bank and U.S.-based Monsanto Company, villagers in the South Asian nation are to be offered small loans to buy "appropriate, environmentally-sensitive" agricultural technologies — including Monsanto's own proprietary herbicides and hybrid rice and cotton, both important crops for Bangladesh.

Grameen's involvement demonstrates the upstart bank's willingness to "try out an idea's business potential," Managing Director Mohammad Yunus says in a statement.

But it remains to be seen whether the "fabled Grameen Bank is turning mean... or if (Monsanto) is turning farmer philanthropist," according to the non-governmental Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI).

The micro-lender and biotech giant will share ownership of a Grameen Monsanto Centre for Environmental-Friendly Technologies, based at Grameen headquarters in Dhaka. Initial projects include running "demonstration farms" for hybrid cotton, rice and maize, as well as

conservation techniques, says Monsanto spokeswoman Diane Herndon.

Monsanto is investing an initial \$150,000 in the centre and will provide more funding as it approves specific centre projects, Herndon says, adding that the company "will look for a long-term return."

Corporate chiefs reason that "there are going to be more than one billion new people in the world in the next decade, most of them in the Third World," she notes. "They can either be your trading partners or not."

The scheme — aimed at boosting crop yields and supporting local ambitions of food self-sufficiency — could "turn poor but independent farmers into poorer and dependent peasants," warns RAFI, which has tracked the social and economic impact of new technologies on rural societies for 20-plus years.

That is because hybrid and genetically-engineered (or "transgenic") seeds often are designed to become sterile after the first season or to develop undesirable genetic deformities, or "throwbacks." Not all hybrids are transgenic, but the difference often cannot be detected by agricultural and customs authorities.

Some scientists have embraced transgenic crops as boosting harvests but a growing number — citing the built-in flaws — see the technology's real advantage as forcing farmers back to

the market every year to buy new seeds.

Monsanto says it will not provide transgenic crop seed because Bangladesh lacks necessary regulations for their approval. Agri-business analysts, however, say the deal could put political pressure on the government to adopt regulations favourable to Monsanto.

The company produces "Round-up," a leading "broad-spectrum" herbicide, as well as crop varieties designed to withstand the plant-killing chemical.

Grameen, whose model of microcredit has become one of Bangladesh's highest-profile exports, could lobby the government on Monsanto's behalf, sources say. It also could use its command of the countryside to force open markets.

"Grameen Bank operates in 36,000 Bengali villages and is often the farmers' only route to credit," notes RAFI Executive Director Pat Mooney. "Poor farmers could find themselves under intense pressure to buy Monsanto's seeds and herbicide."

Monsanto is the world's largest agro-chemical company and the third largest seed enterprise. It reportedly has spent more than \$8 billion in the past two years buying biotechnology businesses and becoming the world leader in cotton seed sales. It is merging with American Home Products to create a \$96 billion "life sciences" company producing

everything from seeds and herbicides to headache pills and water purifiers.

"Many of these transactions were designed specifically to help the company move more rapidly into emerging markets," according to the International Finance Corporation (IFC), which recently published a profile of Monsanto Chairman Robert Shapiro. Monsanto is an investor in Southeast Asia Venture Investments Co., a Singapore-based venture capital fund backed by the IFC, which is the World Bank's private-sector affiliate.

Shapiro is a prominent backer of the "Microcredit Summit," a campaign to provide small loans to 100 million of the world's poorest families by the year 2005, as is Grameen founder Yunus. By hitching up with Monsanto, Yunus could "go down in history as the man who took the side of a corporation against citizens worldwide and who introduced destructive technologies and corporate monopolies in Bangladesh," argues prominent Indian environmentalist Vandana Shiva.

Shiva credits Grameen with starting a global movement which has "used microcredit to enable women to use their skills, their knowledge, their resources to build local markets for their products (and) rejuvenate their livelihoods." The partnership with Monsanto, she adds, could reverse the gains by placing

a premium on imported technologies at the expense of local know-how.

"Monsanto's technologies will push Bangladeshi peasants into debt as they have to spend more money on herbicides, seeds, royalties and technology fees," she predicts, adding that "thousands of farmers have committed suicide in India" after hybrid crops failed, leaving them in hock to money-lenders and seed providers.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research now is seeking to bar imports of seeds containing the "Terminator," a gene which "self-destructs" and renders seeds sterile so farmers cannot store them for future planting. Farmers could be enslaved to the seed market and indigenous crops could be destroyed by cross-pollination, government experts warn.

Monsanto is in the process of becoming full owner of Delta and Pine Land, Inc., developer of "Terminator," which is formally described as a "technology protection system." Staff at the Washington offices of the Grameen Foundation say they are aware of concerns surrounding the Grameen-Monsanto deal but are unaware of any official response. A Microcredit Summit spokesman acknowledges the scheme's critics and says the working details remain to be fleshed out.

— Inter Press

Government puts imported bottled water on the market

By Ahmad Khatib
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Retail sales of one million of bottled water imported from Saudi Arabia to meet soaring demand from a water pollution crisis began Sunday after a one-week delay caused by quality tests.

Citizens flocked to state-run designated stores selling the water that was imported by the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply after Health Ministry tests showed the quality of imported water matched Jordanian specifications.

Officials said another 400,000 litres of bottled water imported from Syria to meet the local shortage would be sold Monday.

The ministry's secretary-general Mohammad Smadi declined to give a price quotation for the ministry's bulk purchase from Saudi Arabia and Syria and for the imports tax it paid.

He said food merchants with valid licences could buy 50 boxes of imported mineral water a day from

government-run warehouses in Amman for resale.

The retail price of one-and-a-half litres of imported drinking water has been fixed at 300 fils and at JD 3.120 per box of 12 bottles, a bit higher than local bottled water.

The dozen bottles sold to the consumer will be JD 3.600.

The government's decision to import bottled water, after a decade-old ban, was apparently taken to break a thriving black market business. But this move has angered Jordan's five water bottling companies with overall investments of JD 15 million who fear about their future once the water crisis ends.

However, the ministry has assured them it would stop imports once the crisis is solved.

The ministry decided to import water after residents complained that several traders were stocking local bottled water to sell it later at black market rates or were selling them smuggled bottled water at high prices.

The water pollution crisis erupted in early July after residents of western Amman complained of foul-smelling and discoloured tap water supplies.

Most areas have been without domestic water for over five weeks as officials work on improving the handling process at the Zai Water Treatment Plant (ZWP) which supplies Amman with 40 per cent of its needs.

'Necessary procedures will be taken to waive water bill payments'

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government said Sunday it will implement the Cabinet's decision of exempting residents of western Amman from paying water bills for the months of July through September.

Munther Khleifat, secretary general of Water Authority told the Jordan News Agency (Petra) that "necessary procedures will be taken regarding this issue." But he gave no further details.

The decision came in line with a request by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, who said last Thursday western Amman residents should not pay water bills for the last three months because they received tainted domestic water supplies from the Zai Water Treatment Plant (ZWP), local newspapers reported.

Turkish data masking industrial weakness

ISTANBUL (R) — A senior Turkish industrialist warned that official figures indicating rising utilisation of the nation's industrial capacity masked weakness among many manufacturing companies, particularly in the textile sector.

"Turkey's textile sector is facing a big decline which reflect the general situation of the manufacturing industry. We cannot see this in the official figures," Husamettin Kavi, chairman of the Istanbul Chamber of Industry,

told Reuters in an interview. Turkey's State Statistics Office (DIE) said recently that capacity utilisation in the country's manufacturing industry stood at 80.9 per cent in July, up from 77.5 per cent in the first quarter of the year and 80.8 per cent in July last year.

The figures didn't appear to reflect a shrinkage in the domestic market caused by a government and inflation programme launched early this year or damage done to Turkey's textile and iron and

steel exports, which contribute almost half of total exports, by the Asian financial crisis.

Kavi said surveys done on a sector-by-sector basis would reflect the real problems in Turkey's economy.

He said the chamber had started a survey in mid-July on production, employment and financial conditions of its member companies. The survey of 1,000 companies will be completed and results announced within a week, he said.

"Early results show that the textile sector is affected deeply by the general stagnation of the economy," he said.

He said small-scale companies, which make up more than 90 per cent of the Istanbul Chamber of Industry's members, were hit more than bigger companies.

"Forty per cent of our chamber members are textile and ready-wear companies and textile exports make up 40 per cent of total Turkish exports," Kavi said. "The textile and ready-wear sector is very important in Turkey's economy and a small disturbance in the sector has a deep effect on the general economy," he added.

He said strong performances in some sectors compensated for declines in the textiles and iron and steel sectors.

"The decline of the textile sector is compensated for by the electronics, food and white goods sectors," he said.

There is rapid growth in the domestic electronics industry.

A big jump in television exports and air-conditioner producers were operating with zero-level stocks, Kavi said.

REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	JPY	CHF	ITL	FRF	ESP	YEN
US Dollar	1.0000	1.7962	0.6109	1.4012	1.4478	1.9489	1774.26	2.0246	6.0284
DE Mark	0.5581	1.0000	0.3364	0.8347	0.8080	0.8984	988.41	1.1288	3.3620
GB Sterling	1.6370	2.9448	1.0000	2.4575	2.3705	2.5305	2904.45	3.3174	9.8685
CH Franc	0.6891	1.1874	0.4065	1.0388	1.0074	1.0674	1181.49	1.3435	4.0144
JP Yen	0.0069	1.2417	0.4216	1.0388	1.07	1.1084	1225	1.3247	4.1627
CA Dollar	0.6488	1.1748	0.4022	0.9888	0.9711	1.0294	1161.49	1.3435	4.0144
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0134	0.3440	0.8448	0.8711	0.9228	1142	1.3247	4.1627
FR Franc	0.4838	0.8671	0.3012	0.7407	0.7139	0.7628	875.51	1.0000	2.9741
ES Ptas	0.1669	0.2982	0.1013	0.2439	0.2399	0.2584	283.61	0.3361	1.0000

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	JPY	CHF	ITL	FRF	ESP	YEN
US Dollar	1.0000	1.7962	0.6109	1.4012	1.4478	1.9489	1774.26	2.0246	6.0284
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	2.5313	0.8317	2.0340	1.9433	2.1005	2142.45	2.4789	7.3620
Saudi Riyal	0.2668	0.4795	0.1623	0.4023	0.3906	0.4199	404.50	0.4686	1.3822
Bahrain Dinar	2.66	4.795	1.623	4.023	3.906	4.199	404.50	0.4686	1.3822
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.4948	0.1698	0.4199	0.4084	0.4311	417.31	0.4543	1.3543
Kuwait Dinar	3.2582	5.8678	2.0631	5.1805	5.0023	5.2605	5142.45	5.9289	17.3620
Emirate Dinar	0.2723	0.4910	0.1678	0.4188	0.4074	0.4301	416.35	0.4539	1.3539
Lebanese/1000	0.86	1.5388	0.5388	1.3388	1.2988	1.3688	1338.88	1.5388	4.5388
Egyptian	0.2340	0.4205	0.1501	0.3705	0.3603	0.3803	360.30	0.4205	1.2340

Mid-East Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	JPY	CHF	ITL	FRF	ESP	YEN
SA Riyal	0.2668	0.4795	0.1623	0.4023	0.3906	0.4199	404.50	0.4686	1.3822
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.4910	0.1678	0.4188	0.4074	0.4301	416.35	0.4539	1.3539
KW Dinar	3.2582	5.8678	2.0631	5.1805	5.0023	5.2605	5142.45	5.9289	17.3620
BH Dinar	0.2747	0.4948	0.1698	0.4199	0.4084	0.4311	417.31	0.4543	1.3543
CY Pound	1.8904	3.3993	1.1941	2.9379	2.8372	3.0372	2937.20	3.3993	10.3993

Metal Prices									
Metal	Bid	Offer	Period	Month	Year	Month	Year	Month	Year
Gold (oz's)	284.55	285.05	USD	6.6484	6.6776	6.7188	6.7188	6.7188	6.7188
Silver (oz's)	5.17	5.2	GBP	7.7227	7.7500	7.7800	7.8228	7.8228	7.8228
Platinum (oz's)	388.3	370.3	JPY	0.6781	0.6445	0.6823	0.6823	0.6823	0.6823
CU (3 Months)	1338	1340	DEM	3.4688	3.5000	3.5055	3.7188	3.7188	3.7188
AL (3 Months)	1624	1628	FRF	3.6000	1.7813	1.9102	2.0234	2.0234	2.0234
Zinc (3 Months)	1033	1038	CHF	1.7188	3.5489	3.6250	3.7655	3.7655	3.7655
Lead (3 Months)	634	637	ITL	0.0400	4.8970	4.9930	-	-	-
Ni (3 Months)	4120	4140							

Main Equity Indices									
Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	P-Cl	Open	Close
New York	DOW JONES	8533.65	-77.76	-0.9	8608.08	8528.2	8514.1	8514.1	8514.1
New York	S&P 500	1081.18	-10.42	-0.96	1091.6	1084.92	1081.6	1081.6	1081.6
London	FT-SE 100	6477	-190.4	-3.36	6854.9	6455.1	6467.4	6467.4	6467.4
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	15288.2	-63.21	-0.41	15416.9	15228.6	15391.4	15391.4	15391.4
Paris	CAC 40	3943.88	-143.81	-3.62	4087.82	3920.77	4087.48	4087.48	4087.48
Frankfurt	DAX	5163.51	-324.71	-6.29	5476.76	5163.38	5488.22	5488.22	5488.22

Energy									
Commodity	Last	Spot	Period	Month	Year	Month	Year	Month	Year
Coffee (c/lb)	112.83	Spot	USD	6.6484	6.6776	6.7188	6.7188	6.7188	6.7188
Cocoa (5/ton)	1923	Spot	DEM	3.4688	3.5000	3.5055	3.7188	3.7188	3.7188
Sugar (5/ton)	263.9	Spot	FRF	3.6000	1.7813	1.9102	2.0234	2.0234	2.0234
Wheat (5/ton)	101	Spot	CHF	1.7188	3.5489	3.6250	3.7655	3.7655	3.7655
Soya (c/lb)	24.08	Spot	ITL	0.0400	4.8970	4.9930	-	-	-
Ten (5/kg)	125	Spot							
Barley (5/kg)	9	Spot							
Rice (5/kg)	416	Spot							

IMF hails Greece for its euro decision

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has hailed a decision by Greece to join the European Monetary Union on January 1, 2001.

Greece took the step last March, devaluing its currency — the drachma — by 14 per cent.

IMF executive directors, in their annual review of the Greek economy,

described the drachma's central rate in the system as "appropriate and sustainable on the basis of a firm implementation of accompanying policies."

Greece is this year aiming at growth of 3.2 per cent, with inflation reduced from five to three per cent by the end of 1999.

The budget deficit is projected to contract from 2.1

per cent of gross domestic product next year to 0.8 per cent in 2001.

Fund directors highlighted the need for "far-reaching structural reforms to allow Greece to realise its growth potential," noting in particular the country's "large and inefficient public sector and the pervasive presence of the state in the economy."



The Choueifat/SABIS® School Network:
14,000+ Students, 19 Schools on 4 Continents,
The 3rd Annual Directors' Meeting

The third annual meeting of the Directors of the Choueifat/SABIS® School Network was held recently, for the first time, in the Middle East. During the week-long meeting, Co-chaired by Mrs. Laila Charles Saad, the network's president and Director General Mr. Ralph Bistany, attendees reviewed the 1997/98 academic year and planned future strategies. The network comprises nineteen co-educational schools in four continents with an excess of fourteen thousand students from ninety-seven different nationalities. The Choueifat/SABIS® track record has enabled this institution, which was established in 1986, to compete and succeed in the competitive educational market in the United States. The success and expansion of the network can be attributed to its philosophy and vision. Without hand-picking its students, the Choueifat/SABIS® schools achieve the highest results. SABIS® believes that university education is accessible to all students and not just to a select few.

To ensure the former, courses are described in clearly stated objectives and a unique point system teaching method is used. Student learning is monitored by a powerful Academic Monitoring System (AMS); a proprietary computerised testing system, which identifies any gaps in knowledge as soon as they form. This academic follow-up is assured by the work of the Student Life Organisation, another unique feature of the Choueifat/SABIS® system. This team promotes involvement in both academic and non-academic activities. Student Life empowers students to make a difference by developing their "life" skills. Students learn to organise their mini-society to solve the problems they face, to make informed decisions and to subject peer pressure to logical analysis, thereby reversing negative and encouraging positive action. In short, students become young leaders who uphold high standards of ethical, moral and civic conduct.

At every step of the way, each individual in the Choueifat/SABIS® network — from key administrators to students — is held accountable. The result is individuals who are qualified in education and in life.

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A Must See!
Those interested, please contact Tel. 5562456 or mobile 079-78739

THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

ACROSS

- Autumn
- Reef-maker
- Leave at the altar
- Double-rod instrument
- Join together
- Golf's acid
- Romeo (Italian car)
- Delta deposits
- Heavy hammer
- Clark Kent's city
- Female horse
- Finish first
- Aper
- Molded
- Modern: pret.
- Give employment
- Final notice, briefly
- Fred or Gracie
- Finished
- Regulations
- Japanese wrestling
- Oyster's gem
- Smack
- Oldsmobile city
- Evergreen shrub
- Decorated too much
- Puns
- Had a bite
- Monumental entrance
- Clark Kent's hometown
- Colombian city
- French textile center
- Train track
- St. Fire
- Raw minerals
- Overdo the TLC
- Irish poet
- Shuttle grp.

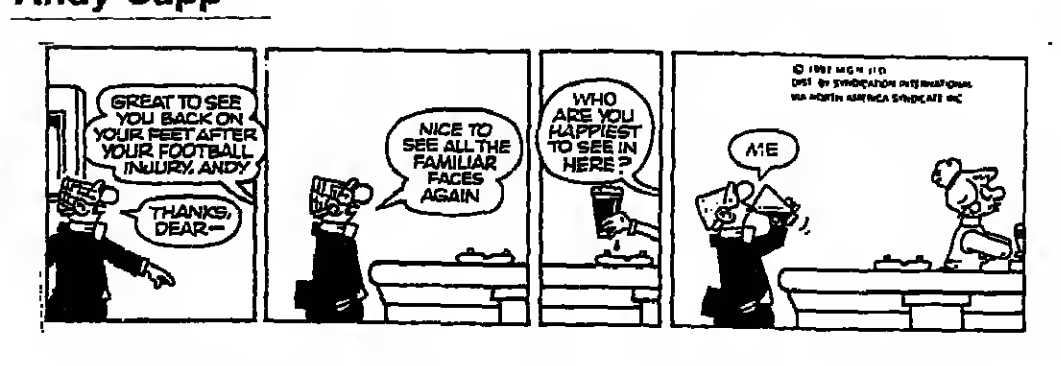
DOWN

- Subtle masses
- Compelant
- Golf ball's arc
- Cordelia's father
- Spittoon
- Bubious
- Vegetable
- Rivulet
- Room at the top
- Class exercise
- Clark Kent's pal
- Son of
- Abraham
- Classic Tierney film
- For rent, in London
- Part of IQ
- Spherical vegetable
- Boutique
- Bees' home
- Square measure
- Clark Kent's boss
- Wisc. neighbor
- Afternoon affair
- Our moon
- Sand out
- Brilliant success
- Impeccable
- Director Spike
- N. T. book
- Walked worriedly
- Muse of poetry
- Brilliant success
- Grin
- Apportion
- Major
- Branding tool
- Doctor
- Zhivago's love
- Prevarications
- "Born Free" lioness

Peanuts



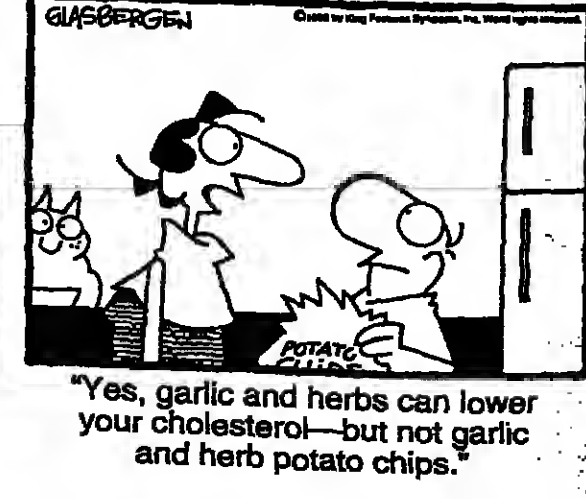
Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

YOUUS
ORFUR
THERAH
BUHLEM

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here:

Yesterday's Jumbles: AWAKE BIRCH DISOWN MISLAY
Answer: The last thing a serious dieter wants to eat — HIS WORDS

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Hamaneh wants government to focus on agriculture after dropping adjustment programme, privatisation

AMMAN — According to Nashed Hamaneh, a member of the Lower House of Parliament, Jordan should stop carrying out the economic adjustment programme in order not to chase away investors. He said that reducing government spending and transferring public sector institutions to the private sector have led to higher interest rates and that have directly affected investments.

Expressing his views about spending priorities in the 1999 state budget, Hamaneh called for formulating a national economic policy in cooperation with the concerned and specialised national parties. Such a national economic policy, he explained, should be based on Jordan's national pan-Arab dimension and on the joint Arab institutions, especially the economic ones.

Hamaneh indicated that the priorities should be halting the privatisation processes of profitable national institutions and dropping the idea of a strategic partner which would only seek financial gains through buying national institutions at low prices. Seeing the strategic partner as basically an entity that wants to control the funds and wealth of the people in the world, the Lower House deputy said a search should be made for a national partner to our institutions.

He emphasised that priority should be given to Arab capital and that the door should be opened for Arab investment. He urged finding solutions for troubled companies and halting any dealings with Zionist institutions in any economic aspect. Hamaneh pointed out that if the

government stops the economic adjustment programme and the privatisation, it should then focus on giving attention to the agricultural sector, especially in the Jordan Valley (Ghor) area.

"Israel earns more than \$4 billion annually from agriculture in the Ghor whereas our farmers and the agricultural projects in this important area post losses year after year," he said. "Had the government followed a scientific agricultural strategy in the Ghor, all problems of indebtedness and other difficulties would have been solved."

Hamaneh also said that the government should give due care to national industries that have raw material resources and that it should resort to protecting the national industry which has reentered considerably. He mentioned the tourism sector as well noting that the government should cooperate with the private sector to market Jordan tourism. "What is happening now is that Israeli companies are the ones that market Jordan's tourism sites as tourists spend seven days in Israel and a free day in Petra," he said.

The deputy concluded by saying that the government should think of setting up productive projects to create job opportunities and contribute to breaking the rise in the rates of unemployment and poverty. He stressed that the funds allocated for the social productivity programme be increased to achieve fair and balanced development in all the governorates as such a process would stop the immigration to urban areas and would support the national private sector (Al Aswaq).

UAE hotels' profits plunge while most neighbours prosper

DUBAI (AFP) — Dubai, the Gulf's hotel capital, took a battering in the first half of the year with an average drop in room yields of more than 11 per cent, the latest figures from hospitality consultants Arthur Andersen show.

Unofficial figures for the first two months of the summer suggest the trend is continuing as the Dubai hotel market, by far the region's largest, may be reaching its saturation point for luxury accommodation.

The emirate of Dubai is the most popular destination for tourists to the seven emirates that make up the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in the south of the Gulf.

"Supply has outgrown demand, but in this business supply growth goes in cycles, preceding demand by a few years. So it may well be that demand next year could push occupancy rates back up," Rutgers Smits, a senior consultant at Arthur Andersen's Bahrain office, told AFP.

Other UAE destinations are also suffering, with nearly a 30 per cent drop in room yields in the capital Abu Dhabi. Room yields are calculated by dividing room revenue by rooms available.

In recent years, Dubai has successfully promoted itself as a family holiday destination and Dubai's tourism board says the number of visitors is increasing every year.

The country's numerous beaches are full, the seemingly endless lines of shopping malls are crowded and the emirate's bustling gold market has seen a steady growth in domestic sales.

A series of lucrative promotions, including a huge annual shopping festival, have helped attract tourists from outside the Gulf countries, notably from Europe.

Hotels have also profited from Dubai's role as a growing business centre, attracting worldwide trade through its Jebel Ali free trade zone and a vast transshipment business through its two ports.

But these increases have been overshadowed by a surge in the number of five star hotels, thinning out the growing business between a greater number of players.

There are around 18 five star hotels in Dubai, with more than 5,100 rooms, according to the latest figures from the Dubai-based BDO hospitality and consulting firm.

The number is set to increase within the next three years by at least a further 15 new five-star hotels and several other expansions to existing hotels, adding another 5,000 rooms.

The result is that Dubai's hotels are still making money, just less of it. Few of

Dubai's hotels will openly admit to the drop, with most claiming unchanged revenues or even slight increases compared with last year.

But unofficial figures exchanged by the night managers of Dubai's top seven hotels, obtained by AFP, show that the number of rooms sold fell by an average of 30 per cent in May and nearly 27 per cent in June, compared with the same months in 1997.

Off the record, many hotel managers admit the falling revenues are a worry. They say they are still making sig-

nificant profits, but less than before.

For an industry that relies mainly on large cash-flow for growth this is a worrying trend. "There will be pressure in the next couple of years to limit the growth of hotels based on a feeling that the market is finally hitting the roof," Smits said.

"There was a similar feeling four or five years ago and that proved to be wrong and there is also an expectation that the tourist market will continue to grow," he added.

Meanwhile, the hotel business in other parts of the Gulf

is showing strong growth. Arthur Andersen's figures show.

Bahrain recorded a 17 per cent yield growth in the first six months of the year compared to the same period last year. Kuwait showed 14 per cent growth, and Saudi Arabia eight per cent growth. Occupancy also rose nearly everywhere in the Gulf except the UAE and Oman, which dropped more than two per cent in terms of occupancy and nearly 11 per cent in terms of yields.

"There is genuine growth in Bahrain, but in places like

Kuwait you have to remember that it is coming from a very low base," Smits said.

"Oman's relatively small hotel industry saw the opening of a new hotel there this year which spread out business and Muscat is perceived as an upmarket destination and therefore demand has been affected by a slight European recession," Smits said.

"But the government has been promoting it as a tourist destination and there is a lot more potential in the market," Smits added.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET

HOUSING BANK CENTER - AMMAN - JORDAN

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ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 23/08/1998

385.500	170.000	ARAB BANK	18.7	0.87	13	350	80305	230.00	229.25	-75-
2.100	1.420	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	13.5	4.22	11	53109	88159	1.66	1.66	-
3.220	1.120	BANK OF JORDAN	2	0.00	6	636	933	1.12	1.12	-
1.300	0.970	MID-EAST INV. BK.	65.7	0.00	7	7000	7060	1.01	1.00	-01-
2.680	1.550	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	11.1	6.56	2	200	316	1.58	1.58	-
8.810	2.610	THE HOUSING BK.	19.4	3.27	10	57800	178581	3.11	3.06	-05-
3.480	1.900	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	8	0.00	6	507	1207	1.82	1.82	-
4.000	1.690	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	17.8	0.00	9	3803	6627	1.77	1.74	-03-
3.900	1.350	JOR. INV. FIN. BANK	23.7	3.25	1	400	616	1.54	1.54	-
1.030	0.790	REIT AL-HAL (REITWA)	3.8	0.00	3	550	429	0.79	0.78	-01-
0.930	0.730	PELLEWAL INV. BK.	0	0.00	1	2000	1380	0.73	0.69	-04-
MARK SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 300.39			ICBG: -0.47			69	126655	365513		
1.250	0.810	AMMAN SEAS INSUR.	48.9	0.00	1	200	178	0.85	0.89	-03+
2.850	1.740	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	7.7	9.12	2	600	1699	2.77	2.74	-03-
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 126.88			ICBG: +0.03			6	877	1920		
2.240	1.470	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	9.9	5.39	5	400	1314	2.01	1.99	-02-
4.030	1.650	JEDID ELECTRICITY	16.7	3.70	3	400	1075	2.69	2.70	-01+
1.500	0.850	NATL. PORTFOLIO	34.3	0.00	16	9950	8470	0.86	0.86	-
1.120	0.740	REAL ESTATE INV.	14.7	0.00	2	141	105	0.75	0.75	-
1.590	0.830	JORDAN ENCL. TRAD.	9	0.00	1	200	64	0.83	0.82	-01-
1.480	1.060	MID. EAST HOTELS	9	0.00	6	200	2979	1.10	1.10	-
4.600	1.830	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	10.0	1.99	8	2730	5496	2.00	2.01	-01+
1.070	0.900	ZAKRA EDUCATION	20.8	0.00	7	7900	7147	0.90	0.90	-
1.890	1.170	UNIFIED CO.	5.1	9.48	2	1750	1450	1.17	1.16	-01-
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 110.75			ICBG: +0.08			50	26594	28788		
3.970	1.840	JOR. COINVEST. FACT.	11.8	5.53	9	5520	11074	2.01	1.99	-02-
6.500	4.750	ARAB POTASH CO.	23.1	4.26	8	32400	15224	4.75	4.70	-05-
11.250	10.050	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.4	8.31	4	350	3745	10.70	10.70	-
5.740	2.400	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	7.6	2.71	30	18309	50725	2.78	2.77	-01-
1.420	0.700	ARAB TRADING CO.	9	0.00	2	600	336	0.75	0.75	-
6.350	4.700	DAR ALBAHRA DV. INV.	6.9	6.08	10	1889	10888	5.80	5.76	-04-
0.570	0.400	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	13.5	0.00	10	10250	4100	0.40	0.40	-
0.830	0.400	NATIONAL STEEL IND.	9	0.00	1	800	320	0.40	0.40	-
0.520	0.300	NATL. STEEL CO.	9	0.00	1	200	88	0.40	0.39	-01-
0.590	0.330	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	9	5600	1874	0.34	0.33	-01-
1.760	0.760	UNIV. CHEM. IND.	8.2	10.00	1	250	200	0.81	0.80	-01-
2.300	0.750	NATL. CABLE WIRE. MFAC	34.7	0.00	4	1000	742	0.75	0.74	-01-
1.730	0.390	JOR. SUIVING CO.	7.6	0.00	6	13750	5500	0.41	0.40	-01-
1.470	1.150	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	14.3	4.62	14	15054	19623	1.29	1.30	-01+
0.700	0.390	KAMHAR INVEST.	9	0.00	18	10000	5447	0.56	0.54	-02-
0.940	0.500	JOR. IND. RESOURCES	9	0.00	5	3500	1820	0.53	0.52	-01-
1.600	1.200	NATL. CHEMICALS	8.7	8.06	3	3150	3876	1.23	1.24	-01+
0.870	0.540	MID-EAST COMPLEX	10.0	0.00	1	200	310	0.55	0.55	-
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 86.25			ICBG: -0.67			139	122902	272854		
GRAND TOTAL										
INDEX: 162.88			ICBG: -0.49			264	277028	669075		
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 23/08/1998										
1.050	0.880	EXPORT & FIN. BNL. 75%	16.8	0.00	2	800	528	0.91	0.91	-
0.800	0.340	JOR. TRADE PAC.	9	0.00	2	2850	1169	0.42	0.41	-01-
0.800	0.500	UNION INV.	9	0.00	3	7744	3948	0.51	0.51	-
0.620	0.240	ARAB FIN. INVEST.	9	0.00	2	3900	956	0.24	0.25	-01+
0.780	0.620	AL-DAMLIYAH	35.7	0.00	5	2259	1378	0.62	0.61	-01+
1.000	0.510	ARAB JOR. INVEST. CO.	14.6	5.81	1	250	215	0.82	0.86	-04+
0.600	0.300	ARAB TRADING CO.	9	0.00	2	600	336	0.75	0.75	-
0.450	0.230	NATL. TEXTILE	9	0.00	1	1000	240	0.24	0.24	-
0.580	0.300	NATL. MOLT. BKG. MANICO	9	0.00	1	550	171	0.32	0.31	-01-
1.220	0.830	ARAB TRADING CO.	9	0.00	1	200	160	0.83	0.80	-03-
0.690	0.580	MID-EAST PETRO. 50%	8.6	0.00	1	500	250	0.58	0.58	-
1.750	1.000	UNION TOWERS 67.5%	10.4	7.67	7	5545	8323	1.62	1.63	-01+
0.730	0.370	RASI PHARM.	9	0.00	1	600	348	0.37	0.37	-
0.350	0.200	IND. BKG.	9	0.00	14	12450	4005	0.20	0.21	-01+
0.730	0.360	IND. CERAMIC	9.4	0.00	5	2250	810	0.37	0.37	-
0.340	0.200	I. TEXTILE MANUF.	9	0.00	1	1000	190	0.20	0.19	-01-
0.950	0.580	ADVANCED PHARM. IND.	9	0.00	2	3000	1620	0.54	0.54	-
0.330	0.200	OPTICALS MANUF. CO.	9	0.00	2	3500	1225	0.20	0.20	-
0.760	0.580	NAT. ALUMINIUM	32.2	0.00	4	1996	1296	0.58	0.65	-
0.310	0.180	NOTEDAR	9	0.00	5	2700	2241	0.85	0.83	-02-
0.000	0.690	AL-KHAYAT PRINTING CO.	10.7	10.62	1	400	280	0.70	0.70	-
GRAND TOTAL										
INDEX: 65.744			ICBG: -0.49			66	65744	31030		
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HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY, AUGUST 24, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Your first assignment is to work — and quickly. Looks like somebody is going to be it, or for you in the wings. The good news is that money is coming in. It's not only from work but also from a partnership or personal settlement. It could simply be a gift.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) The sun is in Virgo and the moon is in Libra. For you, this is a very associated with going back to work. It's a sign, so that's appropriate. You might get a little attention for work that you're used to. Accept the judgement. It's not easy, but you earned it.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) The moon's going into Libra, which is good for you as far as romance, love, and interactions with children. One wonderful thing about children is they teach you not to take yourself too seriously. Remember that today, if your project is not going as quickly as planned.

CANCER (June 22 to July 21) There's something about your place that needs attention and it won't be much trouble to figure out what it is. If you live with somebody, that person has probably been waiting to talk to you about it. You've been busy for the last few weeks, so take some time for personal matters now. It's long overdue.

LEO (July 22 to August 21) It's easier for you to learn now. You could gain valuable new skills during the next few days. A person in authority has work that needs to be done. He or she can't do it, even though he or she may know how. Ask for training and you could pave the way for your next promotion.

VIRGO (August 22 to September 22) Have you thought of taking a trip? If you think you can't afford it, don't worry. It's the vacation of your dreams and you could make it happen. Interestingly enough, it looks like you're going back to a place you or your ancestors have been before. Look around today. You can find a way to make it happen.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) You're looking absolutely marvelous, but don't relax completely. There are a few things that need to be handled and you'll have to focus on purpose to remember what they are. This is where your lists come in handy. If you don't have any, you better make some. This is going to be a recurring theme for a while.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) It's time to re-evaluate priorities. There are communications to come. You need to contact the sort of work you like to avoid, but it's necessary and you can't avoid it any longer. Something in that stack is overdue.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Get to work. Even a boss who doesn't usually care will mind during the coming few weeks. You're in a bind. Don't get sucked into a contract that would make you late for your next assignment. That could be quite damaging right now.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 20) You have a very easy time making decisions, but the way things are set up, you often work for a

Seles knocks out Hingis, goes for 4th Canadian Open

MONTREAL (AFP) — Monica Seles, who chose the Canadian Open for her comeback tournament three years ago, aims Sunday to win the Canadian title for the fourth straight time.

She will face Spain's Arantxa Sanchez Vicario. Both finalists took three sets to win their semi-final matches on Saturday, after both lost the first set.

Seles beat Swiss teen and No. 1 seed Martina Hingis 4-6, 6-3, 6-1, while Sanchez won against the Czech Republic's Jana Novotna 4-6, 7-6 (7/4), 6-2 in a thrilling evening match.

The Sanchez-Novotna match proved to be the most thrilling probably of any match in this year's tournament with the crowd on their feet applauding both players throughout the match.

Novotna opened aggressively, moving to the net frequently to put Sanchez off her strokes in a match where the service breaks were as common as acrobatic cross-court shots which even had the two players applauding each other.

But after two hours of play, and many long-fought points, the 29-year-old Novotna appeared to run out of steam in the final set, losing the first two games before breaking back to make it 2-2.

Sanchez then simply took over the match.

Seles, always a favourite in Canada because this is where she started her competitive comeback, also had a slow start against Hingis, losing the first set 6-4.

But the Swiss teen could not break a single Seles serve in the final two sets.



Monica Seles from the USA returns a forehand to Switzerland's Martina Hingis during semi-final action at the du Maurier Open in Montreal. Seles won the match 4-6, 6-3, 6-2 to advance to the finals (Reuters photo)

Owen signs new Liverpool deal

LONDON (AFP) — England World Cup star Michael Owen ended speculation about his future on Saturday by announcing that he has signed a new five-year contract with Liverpool.

The deal was revealed ten minutes before the kick-off of Liverpool's Premiership match against defending champions Arsenal at Anfield when Owen was presented with the division's player of the year trophy for last season.

The 18-year-old signed a five-year deal during last season, but Liverpool have acted quickly to re-negotiate that contract to ward off interest in him from other clubs.

Owen's stunning contribution to England's World Cup campaign, including the breathtaking solo goal he scored against Argentina, have rocketed him to world fame and led to reports of world record transfer offers for the striker.

Owen said: "I had a clause in my last contract which said that I could re-negotiate when I had played for England in a competitive international."

"I have spoken to the board recently and am pleased to have extended my contract until 2003."

"As I have said all along, all I want to do is focus on my football and hopefully help bring more silverware back to Anfield."

The new deal will almost certainly have at least doubled his wages, which were reported to have been around £10,000 (\$16,500) per week last season.

United struggle as Beckham defies the mob

LONDON (AFP) — Manchester United's poor start to the English Premiership season continued Saturday when they were held to a goalless draw in a scrappy encounter at West Ham.

United, who scraped a 2-2 draw at home to Leicester last week, looked nothing like championship material as they struggled to impose themselves on Harry Redknapp's Hammers.

But Redknapp admitted Alex Ferguson's side were unlucky not to have been awarded a penalty when Neil Ruddock handled in the area after just three minutes.

Referee Peter Jones waved away United's furious appeals and Redknapp admitted: "It was a penalty, a clear case of handball. The referee did us a favour there."

It was a difficult afternoon for United's England midfielder David Beckham, who suffered a barrage of abuse before and during the game.

He was booed every time he touched the ball after suffering the taunts of a seething mob outside Upton Park.

The fans stoned the United coach as it inched its way towards the ground, shouting: "We hate you, Beckham!"

Beckham has been the subject of a hate campaign by some fans, who blame his dismissal against Argentina in the World Cup for England's exit from the competition.

The hostile atmosphere also made for a daunting debut for United's £12.6 million (\$20 million) club record signing Dwight Yorke, who was virtually anonymous in a scrappy encounter.

Elsewhere, Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger paid tribute to "the best back four in the world" after the reigning Premiership champions

stiffed Liverpool to claim a 0-0 draw at Anfield.

The Gunners boss said: "The defence is unbelievable. The average age is probably 34 or more and they coped so well with world-class strikers like Michael Owen and Karlheinz Riedle."

"My dream would have been to have had our back four 10 years ago, but they are still so very good."

Arsenal lost captain Tony Adams to illness before the game. Wenger said: "He was sick overnight, and we decided to send him home rather than risk playing him when he was weak."

It meant Steve Bould came into the side and he was excellent. It shows the value of a good, strong squad.

"The way this defence goes on and on is down to intelligence and motivation; you don't normally get defenders playing on at this level at their age."

England World Cup hero Owen, who signed a new five-year contract with Liverpool before kick-off, was given a rousing welcome at a packed Anfield for Liverpool's first home match of the season.

But the 18-year-old striking sensation struggled to get the better of Arsenal's tight-knit defence and midfield, which succeeded in cutting off his supply line.

Chelsea and Newcastle were both left looking for their first win of the season after battling to a 1-1 draw at Stamford Bridge.

Newcastle boss Kenny Dalglish said he was delighted with his side's battling performance and also took a swipe at the critics who believe flair has been sacrificed since he took over from Kevin Keegan.

"I think we deserved a point because we came here and got a result against a team many people think can win the title," Dalglish said.

"The players should be commended for their hard work and anyone who says players like Alan Shearer, Dietmar Hamann and Nolberto Solano haven't got flair are watching a different team."

Charlton boss Alan Curbishley could barely contain his delight after Clive Mendonca's hat-trick sent Southampton tumbling to a 5-0 defeat — and the newly-promoted London side to the pinnacle of the Premiership.

Curbishley said: "Believe it or not, I was really angry at half-time that we were only one goal up. But you can't argue with the end result. I can hardly believe it."

Tottenham's miserable start to the season continued when they crashed 3-0 at home to Sheffield Wednesday.

The troubled north London club, who lost 3-1 away to Premiership minnows Wimbledon last week, went behind to first-half goals from Peter Atherton and Italian Paolo Di Canio before Andy Hinchcliffe added a third on 78 minutes.

At the end of the match the fallen giants of the Premiership were booed off the pitch before fans demonstrated outside the stadium.

Walter Smith's new-look Everton are also without a win after being well beaten 2-0 away to Leicester City.

Leicester, denied victory at Manchester United last week by a last-minute goal from Beckham, tore into a two-goal first-half lead courtesy of goals from former Everton favourite Tony Cottee and Muzzy Izet.

Elsewhere, a goal by former England winger Steve Stone gave Nottingham Forest a 1-0 victory over Midlands rivals Coventry while Derby and Wimbledon battled each other to a goalless draw at Pride Park.

Rehhagel unhappy despite Kaiserslautern win

BONN (AFP) — Champions Kaiserslautern notched up their second straight Bundesliga win on Saturday when they downed Borussia Monchengladbach 2-1, but coach Otto Rehhagel was far from happy.

Rehhagel slammed his players' inability to maintain concentration for the full 90 minutes.

Goals by Martin Wagner in the 42nd minute and Olaf Marschall in the 63rd set up Kaiserslautern's victory, but they then relaxed and gave the visitors a sniff of victory.

Sladjan Asanin scored for the visitors in the 83rd minute but Kaiserslautern held on and share the lead after two rounds with Bayern Munich.

"We played very well for an hour, but then we got careless," Rehhagel complained.

"We squandered chances which could have led to a 3-0 lead and then let Gladbach score. We failed to keep pressing up front, which annoyed me immensely. We'll have to sit down and talk about that because the same thing happened last week against 1860 Munich."

Bayern stormed to a 3-1 victory over MSV Duisburg, extending the Zebras' run of 31 years without a win in Bayern's Olympic stadium.

Stefan Effenberg has established himself as Bayern's new star in only a handful of matches and underlined his worth on

Saturday with several fierce shots on goal. He also converted a penalty in the 86th minute after he was shouldered in the penalty area by defender Jorg Neun.

Duisburg had boasted prior to the game that they would give Bayern a run for their money but in the end they were simply dazzled by their opponents' class.

Carsten Jancker scored in the 20th minute and Thomas Strunz in the 63rd. Two more strikes — by Frenchman Bixente Lizarazu and Mario Basler — were disallowed because of alleged off-the-ball infringements by Jancker.

After a tough time last season under Giovanni Trapattoni and a string of injuries, Strunz was all smiles afterwards.

"The last six months have certainly not been easy," he said. "But you can see the fans support me and as far as I'm concerned things can keep going as they are." Freiburg showed they have lost none of their elegant brand of football after one season in the second division. Their team of no-names exercised the sleek running-and-passing game of coach Volker Finke perfectly, even taking the lead after 71 minutes through Alexander Iacovili.

"They started well but showed a bit too much respect for us," Leverkusen coach Christoph Daum said after his team had fought back for a 1-1 draw.

Stefan Beinlich equalised for the visitors in the 74th minute.

"There were so many split-second situations which showed what classy players Leverkusen have," said Finke, who claims his only goal is for Freiburg to avoid relegation.

A pair of goals by former Hansa Rostock star Sergei Barharez sealed Dortmund's 3-0 win over Hertha Berlin.

A glaring error by Hertha keeper Gabor Kiraly in the 64th minute, when he kicked fresh air, allowed Bachirou Salou to stroll in and net the ball for Dortmund's third.

Schalke recovered from last week's 3-0 loss to Monchengladbach with a 1-0 win at home to Stuttgart with Martin Max scoring in the 55th minute.

"We had to fight our way to victory today," Schalke trainer Huub Stevens said. "We didn't play all that well but we won, and that's what's important."

Promoted Eintracht Frankfurt lost 2-3 at home to 1860 Munich while on Friday evening Hansa Rostock drew 3-3 with Wolfsburg and Nuremberg beat Werder Bremen 3-2. On Sunday, Hamburg host Bochum.

Makinen wins 5th Finland Rally

JUVASKYLA (AFP) — Tommi Makinen of Finland completed victory in Rally Finland on Sunday, the Mitsubishi Lancer driver's fifth straight triumph in the world championship event.

Makinen finished 35.6secs ahead of Spaniard Carlos Sainz, driving a Toyota, at the end of the 10th leg of the world championship.

He became the first driver to win any world championship event five times in a row. Sainz had to fend off a fierce attack from Finland's Juha Kankkunen, driving a Ford, to hold on to second spot.

Frenchman Didier Auriol claimed fourth place after a number of technical problems with his Toyota.

After 10 rounds of the world championship, Makinen has moved up into second place on 38 points alongside Scot Colin McRae, nine points behind Sainz (47) with three events remaining.

"More than my historic victory, it was the maximum 10 points I wanted from this rally to keep alive my chances of retaining the world title," said Makinen.

The title is not likely to be decided until after the final event of the season, the Rally of Great Britain.

The world championship now takes an unforced break following the cancellation of September's Rally Indonesia. The next event is the San Remo Rally from October 12-14, followed by Rally Australia.

Marseille win after stunning fightback

PARIS (AFP) — Top French side Marseille brought off an astonishing second-half fightback in front of almost 57,000 fans, coming from four goals down to win 5-4 against Montpellier on Saturday night.

The home side, one of the favourites for this year's French championship and the best supported outfit in the league, seemed dead and buried after the visitors had gone 4-0 up after 34 minutes.

But the diminutive Florian Maurice, a new signing this season from Paris Saint Germain, set the scene for a drama-filled final half-an-hour by scoring in the 62th minute.

French World Cup winner Christophe Dugarry, who came on after an hour's play, had set up Maurice's goal and then added two of his own, one four minutes after his arrival and the next in the 71st minute.

Eric Roy levelled the match on 85 minutes, before the winner was provided by central defender Laurent Blanc from the penalty spot with just one minute to play, sending the notoriously temperamental fans in the Stade Velodrome wild.

The win gave Marseille three wins out of three and took them to the top of the table on nine points.

Bordeaux, the only other side with a 100 per cent record, won 1-0 at home to Auxerre.

Lyon were in third after a 1-0 away win at newly-promoted Lorient.



Olivier Echouafni (R) of Strasbourg challenges Augustin Okocha (L) of Paris during their match in the French League at the Meinau Stadium in Strasbourg (Reuters photo)

Monaco, another of the leading league contenders and with three World Cup heroes in their side including goalkeeper Fabien Barthez,

were alongside Lyon on seven points after drawing 0-0 at Toulouse.

Paris Saint Germain won 1-0 away at Strasbourg, with

Italian striker Marco Simone securing the points with a fine 62nd-minute strike. The Paris club are in fifth place on six points.

TODAY AT	PHILADELPHIA 1	PHILADELPHIA 2	PLAZA	CONCORD	GALLERIA 1	GALLERIA 2	Hisham Yanes Theatre
	Robert Duvall & Tea Leoni...in DEEP IMPACT Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Comedian Adel Imam...in AL ZA'EEM Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30	Comedian Adel Imam...in AL ZA'EEM Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30 Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30	CONCORD 1 Robert Duvall & Tea Leoni...in DEEP IMPACT Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD 2 BABY'S DAY OUT Shows: 3:30, 5:30 only	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria GODZILLA Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria CITY OF ANGELS Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30 Adel Imam...in AL ZA'EEM at 10:30 p.m.	STARTING JULY 13TH The Authority in the Service of the People Starring Hisham Yanes and the group For reservations call: 4640155, 4625155

European Athl Machado

BUDAPEST (AFP) — Mariana Machado won her European women's title on Sunday in a second round of 2hrs 2mins, beating Portugal's 100 per cent favourite.

Machado's compatriot Rosa was first three European champions.

The 35-year-old Machado, world title in 1995, came a minute clear of Russia's Olga Korotkova, who served a three-minute suspension for taking a stimulant in 1997. She was also disqualified for the last two years, finishing the race with a time of 2:02:11.

Machado said she felt so good in four years to try and win the title in Sydney and she was objective now.

"I was very happy," Machado said.

Portugal's Manuela Machado was the 17th European Champion of the race with a time of 2:02:11.

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Germany's Heike Drechsler makes her first jump in the women's long jump final at the 17th European Championships in Athletics in Budapest (Reuters photo)

European Athletics Championships Machado retains marathon

BUDAPEST (AFP) — Manuela Machado retained her European women's marathon title here on Sunday in a championship record-time of 2hrs 27mins 10secs, maintaining Portugal's 100 per cent record in the event.

Machado's compatriot Rosa Mota won the first three European championship marathons.

The 35-year-old Machado, who also won the world title in 1995, came home just under a minute clear of Russian Madina Biktagirova, who served a three-month ban for taking a stimulant in 1992.

Italy's Maura Viceconte, who seriously considered retiring after dreadful results over the last two years, finished third.

"It was easy! I felt so good but I won't be back in four years to try and emulate Rosa as my sole objective now is to win the Olympic title in Sydney and then I will call it a day," Machado said.

Machado, who is a keen footballer and has shares in an American Major League Soccer team, made her solo break at the 34km mark after she and Biktagirova had split the leading group of 11. Viceconte led the vain chase with another Italian Franca Fiacconi, statuesque Belgian Marleen Renders and Spain's Rocío Rios.

"My coach Maria do Sameiro had to order me not to attack from the start because I was so highly motivated and believed that no-one would be able to live with me in the form that I am in," Machado said.

Machado's savage 'upping' of the pace ended the medal hopes of France's marathon 47-year-old grandmother Nicole Leveque, who had more than held her own in the first 25km, lying up with the leading group.

She eventually finished a creditable 22nd in her season's best of 2hrs 36mins 52secs.



Portugal's Manuela Machado runs during her final lap in the women's marathon at the 17th European Championships in Athletics in Budapest August 23. Machado won the race with a time of 2:02:55 hours (Reuters photo)

Final medals table after 5 days and 34 events

Country	G	S	B	Total	Country	G	S	B	Total
Germany	4	3	2	11	Greece	1	0	2	3
France	3	6	6	17	Ireland	1	0	1	2
Spain	2	6	6	16	Estonia	1	0	0	1
Italy	3	2	1	6	Finland	0	2	1	3
Ukraine	2	1	6	9	C. Republic	0	2	0	2
Belarus	2	2	1	5	Latvia	0	1	0	1
Sweden	2	1	2	5	Sweden	0	1	0	1
Romania	2	1	2	5	Belarus	0	0	2	2
Spain	2	1	1	4	Bulgaria	0	0	2	2
Portugal	1	2	1	4	Austria	0	0	1	1
Hungary	1	1	0	2	Netherlands	0	0	1	1

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Gross remains confident

LONDON (AFP) — Tottenham manager Christian Gross said Sunday that he was confident of keeping his job despite the growing crisis at the English Premiership club. The fallen London giants are second bottom of the Premiership after losing their first two matches and are desperately trying to sign Manchester United striker Ole Gunnar Solskjaer. Gross acknowledges that Spurs fans are unhappy. "I can understand the fans. Tottenham is their life, their club," he said. "We are trying to bring in players, but we are not going to change our policy and bring in average players. We will only sign quality players. On Solskjaer I am confident, but nothing is done yet. We are starting negotiations." Gross was asked if he felt he would still be in the job at the end of the season. "Sure, I believe that," the Swiss manager told BBC's Radio 5 Live. "The team should not be struggling. The players are committed," he added. Tottenham chairman Alan Sugar does not expect any decision on Solskjaer until early next week. "We have only agreed terms with Manchester United for the player and we will not be speaking to him until next week," he said. Solskjaer is expected to travel with United for their midweek European Champions' League clash with LKS Lodz in Poland.

Mallorca win 1st major title

BARCELONA (AFP) — Real Mallorca won their first major title in their 82-year history and took revenge on giants Barcelona on Saturday as they won 1-0 away to claim the Spanish Super Cup. Dani, settled the game in front of 40,000 spectators at the Nou Camp after Mallorca had won the first leg 2-1. The former Real Madrid star made sure of victory by burying a header in the 30th minute after a quick counter-attack. The game, however, was an ill-tempered affair, with eight players booked, five of them from the winning side. The Super Cup is contested between the Spanish league winners and the cup winners. Last season, however, Barcelona won both, opening the way for Mallorca, the losing cup finalists, to contest this trophy.

Hassler and Moller ask for break

BONN (AFP) — German international midfielders Thomas Hassler and Andy Moller Saturday asked national team coach Berti Vogts for a rest from international games. The pair, both of whom played disappointingly for Germany in this year's World Cup finals, announced they would be taking an indefinite break from the national team. The veterans said they wanted to concentrate on playing well for Borussia Dortmund but said Vogts would then have the option of recalling them at a later date.

Tyson hearing delayed to Sept. 19

LAS VEGAS (AFP) — Mike Tyson's hearing before the Nevada Athletic Commission to have his boxing license renewed was postponed 10 days to September 19. The switch was made from September 9 so as not to conflict with cancer treatments that commission chairman Elias Ghanem is undergoing. The new date is the same Saturday that World Boxing Association and International Boxing Federation heavyweight champion Evander Holyfield defends his IBF crown in his hometown of Atlanta against Vaughn Bean. Tyson was banished by the same Nevada panel for biting Holyfield's ears in their title rematch in June of 1997. He originally applied for reinstatement in New Jersey but withdrew that request after sentiment among boxing officials was that he should seek reinstatement from the Nevada commission that banished him. While Tyson has not fought since then, Holyfield has had only one fight in that span, a partial unification bout against Michael Moorer last November. The heavyweight division has slumped since Tyson's exile and because Holyfield turned down 20 million dollars to fight Britain's Lennox Lewis, who holds the World Boxing Council title. Lewis is set to fight Croatia's Zeljko Mavrovic on September 26 in Connecticut.

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Agassi and Corretja reach Indy final

INDIANAPOLIS (AFP) — Andre Agassi will take a perfect 4-0 career record against Spaniard Alex Corretja into the final of a \$1 million ATP tournament here.

The red-hot American, winner of two U.S. Open tuneup events in the past month, shook off a poor start to dispatch inexperienced but promising Paraguayan Ramon Delgado 7-6 (8/6), 6-3 in a one semi-final.

Corretja, the French Open finalist who is far from limited when he gets onto a hardcourt, defeated Agassi's Davis Cup teammate Todd Martin 6-2, 7-6 (7/4) on a steamy hot afternoon.

Fifth-seeded American Agassi, who already won on hardcourts in Washington and Los Angeles, is ranked eighth in the ATP standings after falling to 141st last November during a dismal 1997.

The multiple Grand Slam champion's victory here was his 10th in 16 semi-finals this year and marked his 50th win of 1998 against 11 losses.

Agassi has now won 19 of his last 21 matches since a second round loss to German Tommy Haas at Wimbledon. But Delgado

made it a fight.

"It's interesting to play someone for first time," Agassi said. "He plays better than his ranking. It was a tough match today. You have to be solid to beat him."

Delgado, ranked 87th, showed poise to start the big match, breaking back for 1-1.

Agassi found himself under pressure in the sixth game, when he had to save three break points to escape 3-3.

The American couldn't break on two chances in the next game as the South American held.

Agassi needed all of his reserves as Delgado earned three set points while holding a 6-5 lead. Agassi saved the tie-breaker.

The American recovered from 1-3 down to stay in contention. Delgado saved an Agassi set point with a drop shot but took the set after an hour when Delgado put a backhand wide.

Agassi saved nine of 10 break points and broke Delgado twice.

"I moved pretty well and stayed solid after losing on

the break in the first set," Agassi said. "I kept it together for the rest of the match."

"I worked my serve well. I got my head down and played the points well. But it was a close first set."

Delgado said Agassi wore him out.

"The thing that most affected me was that I was running a lot," said the 21-year-old. "He was dictating the points and I couldn't attack him."

"I think I played a good match," said the man who put Pete Sampras out in the second round of the French Open. "I think I played a good match and I had my chances. He played unbelievable points when he was down."

Clay-trained Corretja has ensured a return to the ATP top 10 on Monday just in time for the U.S. Open draw on Wednesday. But he had a second-set battle to subdue Martin.

"When I broke back for 4-4 in the second set, I thought I had a chance to win," Corretja said. "I've improved a lot on hardcourt. I got to the semifinals of Key Biscayne and won Dubai on this surface. I'm serving and moving very well."

Kucera beats Krajicek, Ivanisevic ousts Kafelnikov to reach final

NEW HAVEN (AFP) — Defending champion Yevgeny Kafelnikov was upset by Goran Ivanisevic, who won a herth opposite Karol Kucera in the finals of the \$1million ATP International.

Both players seek their first ATP title on American soil in the final after Ivanisevic beat Kafelnikov 6-3, 6-4 and Kucera saved three first set points before rallying to beat Richard Krajicek 7-6 (8/6), 6-4.

Kafelnikov was tired from too much tennis. The Russian was slower to the ball than Ivanisevic in the few rallies that developed, and he could not match his opponent's strong groundstrokes and powerful serve.

"I am tired," Kafelnikov said. "Playing in Toronto, Cincinnati, here, it was a lot of matches and everything came together. I knew sooner or later it would happen. I knew one day I would feel really, really tired and not be able to go through."

There is always drama surrounding Ivanisevic, and at one stage it appeared as if the Croat might default before a ball had been struck. He called for the trainer after the warm-up, but following a period of painful stretching of his left shoulder he decided to play.

"I had a problem this

morning," said eighth-seeded Ivanisevic. "I had some painkillers and special cream put on, but in the warm-up I felt a big pain. The trainer said he couldn't help me and I was broken in the first game, but then the cream kicked in."

"I reduced the speed of my serve and hit a lot of slice serves, and served the best I have done this tournament. I played a great match. I was doing a lot of running today. At one point he made me run, drop shot, then back, then right, then left. The crowd liked it but I was tired."

"Now I have to take care of my shoulder, and put some ice and have a little massage, and play some cards instead of golf."

Even after the injury scare the show wasn't over. Ivanisevic disputed the very first point and dropped his serve, but broke back in the next game and then took a 3-1 lead when Kafelnikov netted a forehand.

That was enough to earn

him the set, and a double-fault by Kafelnikov to end the first game of the second set allowed Ivanisevic to go on to a comfortable victory.

Kucera fought back from 3-6 in the tiebreak to snap Krajicek's spirit, and a break for 3-1 in the second should have been enough to seal the match.

But Kucera faltered as he served at 5-3, double-faulting to drop his serve, but then held off two game points for 5-5 to break again for the match.

"I played pretty good up until 6-3 (in the tiebreak), but I got a bad call when I thought I had hit an ace and lost a little bit of concentration," said Krajicek.

The Dutchman admitted he also felt the effects of a marathon battle with Tim Henman the night before.

"I was a bit slow," he admitted. "It was a combination of four matches in four days, and the match with Henman was so straining, not only mentally but more physically than I thought it would be."

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Regent calls for concerted efforts to portray true image of Islam

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Sunday called for concerted and coordinated efforts to portray the true image of Islam, its centrist character and tolerance.

In an address at a lunch he hosted at the Royal Court in honour of the Board of Trustees of the World Islamic Literary League, Prince Hassan said that Islam advocates a humanitarian message to the various nations of the world, stressing the need for reflecting this message in

Islamic literature. The meeting, attended by Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh and Royal Court Chief Javad Anani, included a dialogue over Islamic literature and the efforts to highlight the values and the teachings of the religion.

The president of India-based league, Sheikh Abul Hassan Nadwa, said that the Arabs should follow in the footsteps of their Prophet and abide by the teachings of Islam.

Present at the meeting were Chief Chamberlain Prince

Ra'd Ben Zeid, His Majesty King Hussein's Private Secretary Prince Ali Ben Nayef, King Hussein's Adviser on Tribal Affairs HRH Ghazi Ben Mohammad and other officials including Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Abbadi, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Bassam Emoush, the overall leader of the Muslim Brotherhood Abdul Majid Thumebat along with members of the Brotherhood and Fakhr Qawar, president of the Jordanian Writers Association.

U.N. Security Council to weigh responses on Sudan strike, Iraq

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — The U.N. Security Council meets behind closed doors Monday to discuss a Sudanese protest against U.S. missile strikes, and to weigh a response in the Iraq crisis.

The 15-member states are to discuss Sudan's complaint following Thursday's U.S. missile strikes against a Khartoum pharmaceuticals factory which according to Washington manufactured a precursor chemical used to make VX nerve gas.

The Sudanese government says the plant was only used to produce medicine.

Sudan wrote to the council Friday demanding an urgent meeting and calling for a fact-finding mission to verify the U.S. claims. The Sudanese stand is backed by the U.N. Arab group.

British and Jordanian engineers involved in the Al Shifa plant's construction said Saturday that the factory did not lend itself to chemical weapons production.

Sudanese President Omar Al Bashir said Saturday that

Khartoum was not seeking a U.N. condemnation of Washington, noting that the United States holds veto power as a permanent council member.

In a letter to the Security Council Thursday, outgoing U.S. Ambassador Bill Richardson said that the attacks on facilities linked to the organisation of exiled Saudi national Osama Ben Laden were in "self-defence."

The missile strikes also caused "moderate to severe" damage at six terrorist camps in Afghanistan, White House spokesman Michael McCurry said.

They were ordered in retaliation for the August 7 twin bombings of the U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam which killed 257 people, including 12 Americans.

Because of delays in translating the Sudanese letter from Arabic, diplomats said that it was not known whether the council would react Monday to the Sudanese request for a

fact-finding mission. The Security Council has not been seized with a complaint from the Taleban over the Afghanistan strikes. Islamists, who control the territory where the alleged bases are located, are not officially recognised by the United Nations.

Also Monday, the council is to be briefed by U.N. special envoy Prakash Shah following his failure to persuade Iraq to reverse a decision suspending cooperation with U.N. weapons inspectors.

Before leaving Baghdad Wednesday, Shah said that "there is no change in the Iraqi decision but they want to continue cooperation with the U.N. for ending the sanctions."

But he said that the Iraqi government, which announced a freeze on cooperation with U.N. arms inspectors on August 5, was prepared to continue cooperating with long-term monitoring operations and with the U.N. humanitarian aid agencies in Iraq.

Amid threats against the U.S. Clinton pledges all-out fight against 'terrorism'

MARTHA'S VINEYARD (AFP) — President Bill Clinton pledged Saturday an all-out fight against terrorism even as the Saudi-born millionaire blamed for two U.S. embassy bombings called on Muslims around the world to take up arms against the United States.

"Our efforts against terrorism cannot and will not end with this strike," Clinton, who was vacationing on this resort island, said of Thursday's U.S. attacks on suspected terrorist sites in Afghanistan and Sudan.

The president also bore down on Ben Laden, who is blamed for the August 7 bombings at U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam that left 257 dead including 12 Americans. Clinton announced he had signed an order barring U.S. companies from doing business with groups linked to the wealthy Saudi exile.

"We have realistic expectations about what a single action can achieve. And we must be prepared for a long battle," he said in his weekly radio address. A U.S. official acknowledged that the Afghanistan-based alleged terrorist mastermind was wealthy and had a "far-flung empire."

"No one anticipates that this is going to have an enormous disruptive effect immediately," the official said privately. "But the degree in which this hems him in over time, especially if we get the cooperation of allies, could well be significant."

On the eve of Clinton's address, Ben Laden called for a "jihad" or holy war because "the attack against the sovereignty of Sudan and Afghanistan is an attack against the entire Islamic nation," his spokesman Sheikh Omar Barki told the Knight Ridder news service Friday from London.

Barkhi added that Ben Laden had issued anti-American communications that also called for attacks on Arab nations with close ties to Washington and warned Muslims to stay away from U.S. embassies and installations.

Barkhi said Ben Laden's call to

Muslims would reveal "Clinton's greatest miscalculation" in ordering the strikes. "Whereas we had estimated maybe we had 30 per cent support among Muslims, [Ben Laden's] popularity now has risen to 75-80 per cent," Barki said.

Sudanese President Omar Al Bashir joined Ben Laden in threatening to retaliate for the U.S. missile attacks.

"We are ready to return a blow in double," the leader of Sudan's Islamic regime told an estimated 10,000 people in Khartoum.

In his radio address, Clinton clearly sought to appease followers of Islam and pre-empt a backlash against Muslims in the United States.

"It is very important that Americans understand that the threat we face is not part of the Islamic faith," he said, adding that millions of U.S. Muslims "deplore the twisting of their religious teachings."

The first Westerner died as a result of the angry backlash Saturday. Italian U.N. official Lieutenant Colonel Carmine Calo died in Kabul of wounds ordered when his vehicle was fired on just hours after the raids Thursday.

There were no deaths reported

in the attack on Khartoum while Afghan sources and hospital officials in Pakistan said that the U.S. missile strikes on the camps in eastern Afghanistan killed 26 people.

White House spokesman Michael McCurry said Saturday that new and better intelligence showed damage to the six alleged terrorist camps in Afghanistan and the Sudanese factory, was "moderate to severe."

In Washington, there were more indications of tightened security.

Police erected solid concrete barriers around the symbol of the U.S. capital, the Washington Monument, although there were no specific threats against the landmark.

Two rows of concrete slabs were erected to prevent potential car bombs from ramming the obelisk. Lee West of the U.S. Park Police said.

A Washington Post-ABC News poll released Sunday showed Americans by three to one approved of Clinton's decision to launch air strikes. More than six in 10 believed Clinton ordered the attacks to punish terrorists, not to divert attention from the Monica Lewinsky investigation.

Syria: Lewinsky affair a Zionist plot

DUBAI (AFP) — The scandal of U.S. President Bill Clinton's affair with former White House intern Monica Lewinsky is a Zionist plot, Syria's Defence Minister General Mustapha Tlass said Sunday.

"It is a plot fabricated by world wide Zionism. Monica Lewinsky is a young Jewish girl that Mossad hired and pushed into working as an intern in the White House," the minister said in an interview with the United Arab Emirates' Al Khaleej newspaper.

"She was charged with trying to seduce the president, and since Bill Clinton is willing to strip off in front of any woman he comes across, he fell in the trap," the minister said.

The general said his theory was proved by the fact that "the scandal was announced one day after a meeting between President Clinton and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on January 17."

"It's why Netanyahu entered the White House as proud as a peacock and rejected the American initiative" on the Jewish state's withdrawal from the West Bank, the minister said.

He added that it was a "Jewish lawyer" who revealed the scandal to special prosecutor Kenneth Starr and "all this definitely proves that world wide Zionism and particularly American Jews are in the service of Israel."



CHARGING FOR THE FINISH LINE: Camels named Modheia, left, Sandy and Will Show Ya, right, charge for the finish line in the 3rd race in Sydney's first camel race meet at Royal Randwick race course, on Sunday. Although camels are raced in the outback, this is the first race meeting held in a major Australian city (AP photo)

Settlers to build 'tourist centre' in W. Bank Israel approves more units for militants inside Hebron enclave

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli settlers announced Sunday that they had created a new Jewish encampment at a popular hiking site in the West Bank as a first step towards creating a permanent, Israeli-controlled tourism centre.

The Council of West Bank Settlers said several settler youths protected by armed guards had set up a camp in the Wadi Qelt, a picturesque ravine which runs through the Judean desert to Jericho in the Jordan Valley.

"We are going to create a major tourism centre and have already obtained the backing of Israeli authorities," said Pinhas Wallerstein, head of the settler's council.

"Our aim is to establish a permanent Jewish presence at the site but not a new settlement, because it is a nature reserve and housing construction is prohibited," Wallerstein said.

In preparation for the project, several settlers protected by guards from a private security agency have been living for several weeks at the entrance to Wadi Qelt, located near the Jewish settlement of Anatot.

Israel Radio said their project included building a restaurant, tourism centre and a monument to several Israeli hikers killed by Palestinians in the Wadi Qelt area in recent years.

The settlers have already raised some \$200,000 in donations for the project, mostly from supporters in France of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud Party, the radio said.

They say that government institutions, including the Jewish National Fund and the Nature Reserves Authority, are partners in planning the project.

Peace Now, a left-wing Israeli group opposed to Jewish settlement of the occu-

PIRME MINISTER Benjamin Netanyahu's cabinet approved Sunday the construction of houses to replace mobile homes in a radical Jewish enclave in Hebron where a rabbi was murdered last week.

"The government has decided to allow the construction as quickly as possible of real houses to replace the mobile homes in Tel Rumeida," the cabinet announced, referring to a neighbourhood in the Jewish settlement of Hebron.

"Our policy is to strengthen and develop Jewish settlement in Hebron, including in Tel Rumeida," a cabinet communiqué quoted Netanyahu as telling the ministers.

The decision was immediately denounced by Yasser Arafat's Palestinian National Authority, which controls 80 per cent of Hebron.

"We harshly condemn the Israeli cabinet decision to increase settlements," said Nabil Abu Rudeina, Arafat's spokesman.

"This will not help the peace process and we ask Israel to stop such actions," he told AFP.

The Israeli action was a response to the stabbing death Thursday night of Rabbi Shlomo Raanan, 63, in his mobile home in Tel Rumeida.

Tel Rumeida is an isolated quarter of seven families set among Arab homes on a hilltop above the rest of the 400-strong Jewish settlement enclave located in the heart of Hebron, a Palestinian city of 120,000.

The Tel Rumeida quarter is home to the most radical members of the military Jewish community of Hebron, including Baruch Marzel, a leader of the outlawed anti-Arab movement Kach.

Israel withdrew from 80 per cent of Hebron in January 1997 but remains in control of the final fifth where 15,000 Arabs live alongside the Jewish settlers.

Israeli troops beat, arrest 3 journalists

HEBRON (AFP) — Israeli troops beat and detained three Palestinian cameramen working for U.S. and German television on Sunday in the Israeli-occupied sector of Hebron, witnesses said.

The cameramen were grabbed and roughed up when they tried to enter the Israeli-controlled zone where the army has been enforcing a curfew since the murder of a Jewish settler in the sector on Thursday, they said.

"The soldiers punched them and hit them with their rifle butts before taking them to a local police outpost," said a fourth Palestinian cameraman who was also detained but who was quickly released because he held an Israeli ID card.

It was not immediately known if the other journalists were hurt and Israeli officials had no immediate comment.

The three were Amir Jabari, who works for the U.S. network ABC, and Tarek and Mawafiq Al Kayal, who works for Germany's ARD television.

boundaries of existing settlements. They say the construction is designed to extend Israeli control over territory ahead of negotiations on permanent borders of the eventual Palestinian entity.

Wadi Qelt is a popular hiking spot for Israelis and other tourists and includes several springs and a centuries-old Greek Orthodox monastery, Saint Georges.

French foreign minister says Iran wants a place in the world community

TEHRAN (AP) — Iran is looking to reclaim a central role in the community of nations, and its new leaders strongly condemn terrorism, France's foreign minister said Sunday.

With his high-profile mission, Hubert Vedrine was clearly seeking to give a boost to Iran's moderates in their bitter struggle against the hard-liners.

Though he did not say that publicly, he made a point on Sunday to salute "the impressive will of the Iranian electorate" that voted the moderate President Mohammad Khatami into power a year ago.

"Iran is looking to recover her role, her strategic role," Vedrine said, a role he said was natural, given the country's "size, potential and position." After a second day of talks, in which he met Khatami and again spoke with his Iranian counterpart, Kamal Kharrazi, Vedrine would not give specifics on the most difficult issues he came to discuss: human rights and

terrorism. He did, however, emphasise that all the officials he met condemned acts of terrorism — including the recent U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania.

"All my interlocutors said in a solemn tone that they absolutely condemn acts of terrorism," Vedrine told a news conference.

On human rights, he would say only that the dialogue is continuing.

"On certain points we have values in common, and on certain points we have different interpretations," he said. He didn't mention what, if any, reaction the Iranians had when he raised the subject of the death sentence on British author Salman Rushdie.

Lately, however, both Europe and the United States have noted positively the changing signals from Iran.

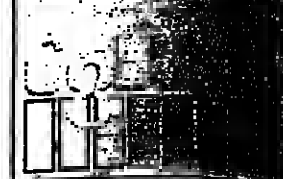
Of course, the gap remains wider with the United States, which broke off ties with Tehran following the 1979 Islamic Revolution that toppled the U.S.-backed shah.

Benjamin Netanyahu. Without disagreeing with the assessment of Netanyahu's government, Vedrine said he'd told the Iranians that France feels any peace process is better than none at all.

The two-day trip by Vedrine, which ends Sunday evening, is the highest-level French visit in seven years. Relations chilled only a few months after the last trip by a French foreign minister, in 1991, when a former Iranian prime minister turned opposition leader was assassinated in Paris.

Shapur Bakhtiar was one of eight dissidents in France believed killed by Iranian hit squads.

Vedrine also said he'd discussed a host of regional conflicts with the Iranians, including Afghanistan and Kosovo. Shaking hands with the broadly smiling Khatami before their meeting, Vedrine handed him a written message from President Jacques Chirac, who he later said had invited the Iranian president to visit Paris.



Hollywood stars lobby to overturn a deal

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Actors Julia Roberts, Harrison Ford, Madonna and 16 other Hollywood stars are lobbying to overturn a deal between California state and the Pacific Lumber Company that would destroy old-growth redwood trees. The stars signed a letter written by Woody Harrelson saying the plan to conserve 200,000 acres of timberland as part of an overall land transaction is too little too late. "We appreciate a concern for protecting habitat, but this deal is for good for the forest and is an insult to taxpayers," the letter read.

Favourite soup spoon of Lennon is up for auction

BARCELONA (AFP) — An item of sentimental value to slain Beatle John Lennon is coming up for auction — his favourite soup spoon. According to his former wife Cynthia, Lennon only ever wanted to eat soup with one particular spoon. The object of his affection is part of a sale of record memorabilia in Barcelona in November.

Lennon, who was gunned down in 1980, bought the spoon at the upmarket London store Harrod's. Its auction price will start at \$66. The auction will also include Rolling Stones memorabilia.

A U.S. official ruled out a presentation of evidence during the closed-door meeting on Monday. The Al-Shifa plant was completely destroyed by a Thursday attack by cruise missiles fired by U.S. warships in the Red Sea.

The worker was killed and was injured according to plane officials.

By officials in U.S. President Bill Clinton's administration have repeated that they have not the plant was making a move to lead U.N. nerve gas in late declined to identify the record. Sudanese government officials and Al Shifa extension have vehemently rejected the U.S. charges, and say the plant was only producing pharmaceuticals for humans and animals.

The Sudanese government Monday announced the recall of its ambassador from London and demanded that London order its ambassador to leave Khartoum, the British Foreign Office said.

The decision was made following British support for the American military operation. A Palestinian diplomat said that

Madonna: Fame is a drug

NEW YORK (AFP) — Pop star Madonna worked relentlessly to achieve fame but today she compares celebrity status to "a drug," according to the New York Post. "It's like a drug," Madonna, 40, told the Post. "It fills up a space inside you and gives you the impression that you are full and that you're complete, when actually it does quite the opposite. Fame consumes you, exhausts you and finally depletes you. The single mother of a daughter she named Lourdes blames fame for breaking up her relationships with men."

Al Pacino plays an anti-tobacco crusader in a new movie

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Actor Al Pacino has played a fair number of bad guy roles — notably in the "Godfather" trilogy — but in his new movie he is an anti-tobacco crusader. Pacino plays a television journalist in the movie about a former cigarette company vice president who turns against the tobacco industry. Set in New Orleans (but filmed in Mobile, Alabama), the movie chronicles "60 Minutes" producer Lowell Bergman — played by Pacino — who interviewed former Brown & Williamson tobacco industry whistle-blower Jeffrey Wigand.

Youngest son of Robert F. Kennedy marries school teacher

NANTUCKET (AP) — Surrounded by family members dressed in morning suits and white flower dresses, the youngest son of the late Robert F. Kennedy married a school teacher Saturday. Douglas Kennedy, a reporter for Fox News in New York City, married Molly Stark, a Vermont native who teaches autistic children at St. Mary's Catholic Church in New York's Brooklyn borough.

JERICO (R) — demolished five Palestinian houses which they said "These structures were followed legal action for Israeli demolition in the occupied Jordan Valley. The Jordan Valley. Its owner was the third time the house was torn down. "I was land," Sarhan said on a cattle pen owned by Sarhan used by farmers were